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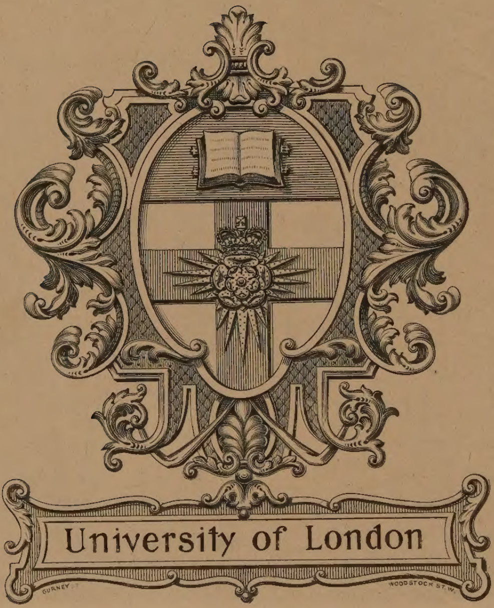

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

SIXTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

5 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXLVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE ELEVENTH DAY OF MAY
TO THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF MAY, 1905.

SIXTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1905.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,
UNDER CONTRACT WITH HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY
WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

8472

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THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.: Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law). The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1

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Donovan's Divorce Bill [h.l.].—A witness ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill, and to produce a document 1

Hastings Tramways Bill [h.l.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 13th and 31st of March last discharged, and Bill committed 2

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London Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 3

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Hitchin and District Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 3

McDonnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House, together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the case. Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned 3

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Morley Corporation Bill; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.:

V. Ridley,
L. Belhaven and Stenton,
L. Ravensworth,
L. Brougham and Vaux (*Chairman*),
L. Biddulph;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 3

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed 4

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1 Bill) [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order) 4

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Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next 4

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next 4

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next 4

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Licensed Houses.—Petition for early closing of; of Lewisham Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 4

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.].—Petition in favour of; of Middlesbrough Corporation; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 5

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Railway Returns.—Return relating to the railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1904. Preliminary statement 5

Trade Reports: Annual Series.—No. 3367, Greece (Cyclades); No. 3368, France (Havre); No. 3369, Greece (Morea, Aetolia, and Acarnania); No. 3370, Greeee (Piræus) 5

Army.—Return of stores and supplies despatched to South Africa during the period 1899–1901 destroyed locally. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

Tramways Act, 1870.—Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consent of the County Council of Glamorgan to the Aberavon Tramways Provisional Order 5

India.

Home accounts. Home accounts of the Government of India.

Estimate. Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India for the year 1904–1905, compared with the results of 1903–1904.

Finance and Revenue Accounts. Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India. for the year 1903–1904 5

Board of Education (Report under Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889).—Report of the Board of Education on the administration of schools under the Act 5

Somaliland Protectorate.—Treasury Minute, dated 13th April, 1905, as to audit of the accounts of the Somaliland Protectorate 5

Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890.—Account showing receipts and expenditure on account of proceedings under the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, during the year ended 31st March, 1905 6

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BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).—Accounts showing the receipts and expenditure on account of bankruptcy proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1905 6

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minutes. Dated 12th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to Matthew Henry Danily, postmaster of Malpas. Dated 10th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to John Bolton, late of the Engineer-in-Chief's Department, General Post Office. Dated 4th May, declaring Yunnaufu and Tengyueh to be unhealthy places within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 6

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.—Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on the 20th January, 1905, amending Statutes III. and XVI. of the Statutes of the College. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 71] 6

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.] [SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Monkswell 6

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Monkswell 7

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

On Queston, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Avebury 8

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 8
The Marquess of Ripon 8
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 9
Lord Tweedmouth 9
Lord Avebury 9

Moved, "That the debate stand adjourned until this day week."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned accordingly to Thursday next.

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Hylton 10

Moved "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Hylton.*)

Lord Zouche of Haryngworth 21
Lord Wolverton 22
Lord Tweedmouth 23
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 25
Lord Hylton 26
Lord Stanmore 27

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Lord Wolverton.*)

The Earl of Crewe 27
The Marquess of Lansdowne 27

On Question, Motion agreed to. Bill referred to a Select Committee.

BRITISH TRADE IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

The Earl of Jersey 28
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 28

House adjourned at Six o'clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 11TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order — 30

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 30

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 31

Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 31

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West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 31

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 31

Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table 31

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Reports to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time 31

Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time 31

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time .. 31

Truro Water Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time 31

Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 31

Highland Railway Bill.—Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]: Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords]; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 31

PETITIONS.

Dogs (Protection) Bill.—Two Petitions from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table 32

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions for alteration; from Banff; and Linlithgow; to lie upon the Table 32

House-Letting (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Paisley, against; to lie upon the Table 32

Lands Valuation (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Paisley, against; to lie upon the Table 32

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Edmonton, against; to lie upon the Table 32

Vaccination Act, 1898.—Petition from Aberdeen, for extension to Scotland; to lie upon the Table 32

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petitions in favour; from the Council of the Women's Liberal Federation; Hammersmith; Hornsea; and Portobello; to lie upon the Table 32

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT, 1889).—Copy presented, of Report of the Board of Education for the year 1903–4 on the Administration of Schools, under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 158.] .. 32

EAST INDIA (ESTIMATE).—Copy presented, of Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India for 1904–5, compared with the results of 1903–4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 159.] .. 32

EAST INDIA (FINANCE AND REVENUE ACCOUNTS).—Copy presented, of Finance and and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India for 1903–4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 33

EAST INDIA (HOME ACCOUNTS).—Copy presented, of Home Accounts of the Government of India [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 160.] 33

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3369 and 3370 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 33

TRAMWAYS ACT, 1870.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the Consent of the County Council of Glamorgan to the Aberavon Tramways Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 161.] 33

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).—Address for "Return showing the estimated position, as regards Capital Expenditure, of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1905, and the proposed Expenditure thereon during 1905–6 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 138, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Price.*) 33

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SALARIES OF CLERKS IN THE VETERINARY BRANCH OF THE IRISH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 33

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INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 35

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Imperator *v.* A. C. Rolt.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Brodrick .. 38

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The Judge-Advocate-General.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 41

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Chinese Recalcitrants in the Transvaal.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 44

White Labour in the Transvaal.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel and Mr. Bright (Shropshire, Oswestry); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 45

Salonica—Massacre at Kuktish.—Question, Sir A. Hayter (Walsall); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 45

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MARKYATE MOTOR FATALITY.—Question, Mr. Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 46

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TELEPHONE AGREEMENT.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) .. 51

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AFFORESTRY IN IRELAND.—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.) and Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 54

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ALLEGED PAYMENT OF SECRET COMMISSIONS BY PARLIAMENTARY AGENTS.—Question, Mr. Benn, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 57

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Keir Hardie and Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 60

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure :—Mr. Milvain; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Malcolm.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords], That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of McConnell's Divorce Bill, as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned.

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £58,595, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and other Expenses in the Department of His Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments, including Expenses in respect of Advances under The Light Railways Act, 1896."

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 62
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 84
Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 89
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 93

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Committee of Defence, Salaries, etc.), be reduced by £100."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Mr. Peel Manchester, S.) 105
Mr Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 108
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 110
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 118
Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 122
Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 127

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

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EVENING SITTING.

HAMMERSMITH, CITY AND NORTH-EAST LONDON RAILWAY (BY ORDER).

Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 129

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Report of Select Committee on Standing Orders of March 7th last on the Hammersmith, City, and North-East London Railway (Petition for Bill), be referred back to the said Select Committee to consider and report whether the Standing Orders may now be dispensed with and the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill in respect of certain of the railways and works proposed to be authorised thereby, subject to such conditions as to the said Select Committee may seem meet."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

The Deputy-Chairman of Committees (*Mr. Jeffreys, Hampshire, N.*) .. 132
Mr. Halsey (*Hertfordshire, Watford*) 132
Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 134
Mr. David Morgan (*Essex, Walthamstow*) 135
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 135
Dr. Shipman (*Northampton*) 136

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 71; Noes, 133. (Division List No. 156.)

SUPPLY (6TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6. CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £58,595, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1906, for the Salaries and other Expenses in the Department of His Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments, including Expenses in respect of Advances under The Light Railways Act, 1896."

Major Seely 139

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Committee of Defence, Salaries, etc.) be reduced by £100."—(*Major Seely.*)

Mr. Renwick (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 141
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 144
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 147

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Mr. A. J. Balfour 150
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 159
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 160
Sir Elliott Lees (Birkenhead) 161

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House that the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS and MEANS was unable, owing to indisposition, to resume the Chair as Deputy-Speaker.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, in pursuance of the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.—Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 163
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 163
Sir Elliott Lees (Birkenhead) 163
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 163
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 164

Question put, and agreed to.

NEW BILL.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (PILOTAGE).—Bill to amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in respect of Pilotage Certificates, ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Seymour King, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir John Colomb, Sir Robert Penrose FitzGerald, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Joyce, General Laurie, Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Gilbert Parker, Mr. James Reid, and Mr. Runciman.

Merchant Shipping (Pilotage) Bill.—" To amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in respect of Pilotage Certificates," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th May, and to be printed. [Bill 210.] 164

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 12TH MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 165

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill.—North Sussex Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed 165

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill.—Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill ; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners 165

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 165

London Squares and Enclosures (Preservation) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 165

Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 21st of February and 31st of March last discharged, and Bill committed 165

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.—Petitions for early closing of; of Executive Committee of Stepney Ruridecanal Church of England Temperance Society; Reading and District Temperance Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 165

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS BILL [H.L.].—Bill (on Motion) (by leave of the House) withdrawn 165

NEW BILL.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to provide for the appointment of an additional Church Estates Commissioner and for matters incidental thereto. Was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 72.) 166

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order) 166

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order) 166

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. (SECOND READING).—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

The Earl of Leven and Melville 166
The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*) 168

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*The Earl of Leven and Melville.*)

Lord Tweedmouth 170
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 171
The Earl of Leven and Melville 172

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

House adjourned at five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY 12TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk of the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 172

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 173

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 173

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment 173

Rotherham, Maltby and Laughton Railway Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 173

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Durham and Framwelgate, Hanley, and Southport," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 211.] .. 173

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order, under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Alexander Scott's Hospital," presented by the Lord-Advocate, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Tuesday next 173

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order, under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dundee Water," presented by the Lord-Advocate, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Tuesday next 173

Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Arbroath Corporation Water," presented by the Lord-Advocate, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Tuesday next 174

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PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Kilmore and Kilbride, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 174

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 174

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Alva; Ayrshire; Benholm; Dundee; Dunfermline (two); and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table 174

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from King's Norton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 174

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (CHILDREN) BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 174

THAMES ESTUARY (LIGHT VESSELS).—Petition from Ramsgate, for connection with the shore by wireless telegraphy; to lie upon the Table 174

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Ashton-under-Lyne; Ayr; Belfast; Chelsea; Fulham; Levenshulme; Liverpool; Manchester and Salford; and Rothesay; to lie upon the Table 174

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th April; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 162.] 175

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BRITISH TRADE IN CHINA.—Question, Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.); Answer, Earl Percy 175

GRANTS TO SCOTLAND FOR EDUCATION AND FOR RELIEF OF RATES.—Question, Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 176

PERIOD OF REPAYMNET OF LOANS UNDER NAVAL AND MILITARY WORKS ACTS IN RESPECT OF HALIFAX, BERMUDA, JAMAICA, AND ST. LUCIA.—Question, Mr. Ashton (Bedfordshire, Luton); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 177

BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE AND THE COLLECTION OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS. —Question, Sir Charles Welby (Notts., Newark); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 177

DEATHS FROM PLAGUE IN INDIA.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 177

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Direct and Indirect Taxation in Great Britain and Ireland.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 178

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Outrage at Gorlumloe, County Westmeath—Police Inquiry.—Question, Mr. Tully (Leitrim, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 180

Interference with a Nationalist Procession at Loop, County Kerry.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 180

County Donegal Land Appeals—Delay in Delivery of Judgment.—Question Mr. McFadden (Donegal, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long .. 180

Selection (Standing Committees).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from serving on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill; Mr. Waldron and Mr. Harrington; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Vincent Kennedy and Mr. Charles Devlin.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee of Selection that they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill; Mr. Malcolm; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Ernest Flower.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

Vehicles' Lights Bill.—[Second Reading.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Bigwood (*Middlesex, Brentford*) 181
Lieut.-Col. Tufnell (*Essex, S.E.*) 185

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Cathcart Wason (*Orkney and Shetland*) 185
Sir Herbert Maxwell (*Wigtonshire*) 188

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 191
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 194
Mr. Moon (*St. Pancras, N.*) 195
Mr. Nussey (*Pontefract*) 195
Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness*) 196
Sir Charles Renshaw (*Renfrew, W.*) 197
Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (*Lincolnshire, Gainsborough*) 199
Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 201

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Sir H. Shaw-Stewart (Renfrew, E.) 201
Sir Walter Thorburn (Peebles and Selkirk) 202
Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbright) 204
Mr. Brooke Robinson (Dudley) 205
Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange) 206
Mr. Leveson-Gower (Sutherland) 207
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 208
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 210
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen) 214

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 109 ; Noes, 108. (Division List, No. 157.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—[Second Reading.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 217
Sir John Rolleston (Leicester) 221

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 226
Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.) 233

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Whereupon Mr. Deputy-Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-six minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 15th MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with.—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) [h.l.] ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) [h.l.].

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with ; —Whitechapel and Bow Railway ; Great Western Railway (New Railways) ; Aylesbury Gas ; Ealing Corporation ; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas ; Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) ; Halifax Corporation ; Stockport Corporation ; Bristol

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Corporation; Croydon Corporation; Heckmondwike Improvement; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company; Aberdare Urban District Council; Colne Corporation; Swansea Corporation. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 237

Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill. [H.L.].—Petition for additional provision; of the British Electric Traction Company, Limited, and of the Rushden Urban District Council, together with the proposed Amendments annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 237

Hull, Barnsley and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill.—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 16th of April and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 237

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 237

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned this day at One o'clock 237

Rotherham, Maltby and Laughton Railway Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 238

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment. The said Amendment considered, and agreed to 238

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham and Rochester Water Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to 238

Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.].—Morley Corporation Bill; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee ofSelection, That the Lord Hare (*E. Listowed*) be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Ridley; read, and agreed to 238

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord De Mauley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Denman; read, and agreed to 238

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow 238

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 238

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow 238

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TRADE WITH SIBERIA.—Report on the condition and prospects of British trade in Siberia by H. Cooke, Special Commissioner of the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade 238

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No. 3372. China (Kiungchow).

No. 3373. China (Chinkiang).

No. 3374. Persia (Kerman). 239

INDIA (FOREST SERVICE).—Correspondence relating to the training of forestry students 239

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Report for December, 1904 .. 239

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Code of regulations for continuation classes providing further instruction for those who have left school, 1905.

Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1904–1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 239

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL [H.L.].—House in Committee (on Re-commitment) (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 239

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, at end of clause to insert the words, 'Provided that a local authority in making by-laws under this section shall provide for the exemption from the operation of such by-laws of any hoardings and similar structures in use for advertising purposes, and of any advertisements exhibited at the time of the making of the by-laws, for such period, not being less than twelve months, as they may think fit."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

Lord Belper 240

On Question Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Camperdown 240

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Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, line 16, after the word 'landscape' to insert as a new sub-section the words : (3) For preventing the affixing or otherwise exhibiting advertisements upon any wall, tree, fence, gate, or elsewhere on private property, without the consent of either the owner or the occupier previously given in writing."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord Belper 240
Lord Heneage 241
Lord Braye 241
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 241
The Earl of Camperdown 242

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3.

Lord Monkswell 242

Amendment moved—

"At end of Clause 3, to insert the words, 'Provided always that the powers conferred by this Act shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of, any other powers of making by-laws possessed by any local authority.'"—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 243

On Question, Amendment agreed to

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 243

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 12, to leave out the word 'and,' and after the word 'Wales' to insert the words 'or Ireland.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 243

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 14, after the word 'fund,' to insert the words, 'in the case of the city of London out of the consolidated rate of that city and.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendments agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 244

Amendment moved—

" After Clause 4, to insert as a new clause the words : ' (1) In the application of this Act to Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland shall be substituted for the Secretary of State. (2) The town council of a burgh to which Section 77 of the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1903, applies, shall not have power to make by-laws for the regulation and control of hoardings and similar structures in terms of this Act. (3) By-laws made by a county council shall not be of any force or effect within a Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh. (4) The section of this Act relating to expenses shall apply to Scotland with the substitution of ' general purposes rate ' for ' county fund ' ' Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh ' for ' borough ' and ' burgh general or police assessment ' for ' borough fund or borough rate.' "—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, new clause agreed to.

Clause 5.

Consequential Amendments agreed to.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Amendment moved—

" After Clause 5, to insert as a new clause the words : ' In the application of this Act to Ireland the Lord-Lieutenant, acting with the advice of the Privy Council, shall be substituted for the Secretary of State.' "—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

Remaining clause agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee ; and to be printed as amended (No. 73.)

Naval and Military Medals Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) 245

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

Lord Muskerry 245

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

INDENTURED IMMIGRANT LABOURERS IN THE COLONIES.

Lord Stanmore 246

THE DEFENCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

The Earl of Wemyss 247

Moved, "That the Duke of Wellington's letter to Sir John Burgoyne in 1847 on our defenceless state be printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 248
The Earl of Wemyss 249
The Duke of Rutland 249
The Earl of Wemyss 250
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 251
Lord Tweedmouth 252
Lord Newton 253

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 15TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords] Sheffield University Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 254

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 254

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PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.

Commercial Union Assurance Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 255

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 255

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [LORDS].—Truro Water Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 255

London County Council (Money) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 255

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [LORDS].—Te be read a second time to-morrow 255

London Government Scheme (London and Middlesex) Bill.—"To confirm a Scheme made under The London Government Act, 1899, relating to the counties of London and Middlesex," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Wodehouse; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 212] .. 255

London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill.—"To confirm a Scheme made under The London Government Act, 1899, relating to the Hackney and Edmonton Unions," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Wodehouse; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 213.] 255

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional orders of the Local Government Board relating to Liverpool and Poole and the counties of Essex and Hertford," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 214.] 255

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Briton Ferry, Clifton, Dartmouth, Hardness, Horsforth, and Teignmouth," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 215.] 255

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Acton, Bradford (Yorkshire), the Fylde Water Board, and the Fylde, Preston, Garstang and the Middlesex Districts Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 216.] 256

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Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill.—Ordered, That the Evidence taken before the Committee on the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill, 1903, and the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill, 1904, be referred to the Committee on the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 256

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 256

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London and North-Western Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 256

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 2).—Colonel BOWLES reported from the Committee on Group No. 2 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table 256

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LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT (LONDON) (NO. 2) BILL.—Petition from St. Giles in the Fields and St. George, Bloomsbury, against; to lie upon the Table .. 257

STREET BETTING BILL.—Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 257

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BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report on the Banking and Railway Statistics of Ireland for the half-year ended 31st December, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 257

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 257

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CONTINUATION CLASSES).—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Continuation Classes providing further instruction for those who have left school, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 257

EAST INDIA (FOREST SERVICE).—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the training of Forestry Students [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 257

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 11th May; *Mr. Price*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 163.] 258

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Mr. Roche 303
Mr. Walter Long 305

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire) rose in his place and claimed to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the declaration by the Board of Education of the default of the county of Merioneth under the provisions of the Defaulting Authorities Act. In relation to other counties, they can hardly be considered as proper ground for adjournment Motions.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen,

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until this Evening's Sitting 305

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Charles Craig; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore 306

Report to lie upon the Table.

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NEW BILLS.

Valuation (Ireland) Bill.—" To make provision with respect to a Revision under the Irish Valuation Acts in case of a Revaluation under Section 65 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland ; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 217.] 306

Sunday Trading (Scotland) Bill.—" To regulate and control Sunday Trading in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett ; supported by Mr. Hunter Craig, Sir Mark Stewart, and Mr. John Wilson (Glasgow) ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 218.] 306

Elementary Education (School Attendance) Bill.—" To alter the age of Exemption from Attendance at School," presented by Mr. Yoxall ; supported by Mr. Crooks, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Ernest Gray, Mr. Alfred Hutton, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Dr. Macnamara ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 219.] .. 306

Architects (Registration) Bill.—" To provide for the Registration of Architects," presented by Mr. Atherley-Jones ; supported by Sir William Coddington, Mr. Wallace, and Sir Christopher Furness ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th May, and to be printed. [Bill 220.] 307

Salmon Fishery Law Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Salmon and Freshwater-Fisheries Acts, 1861 to 1892," presented by Mr. W. H. Grenfell ; supported by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, and Mr. Charles Hobhouse ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 221.] 307

Finance Bill [Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. Clancy (*Dublin Co., N.*) 307

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out from the word ' That ' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words ' this House, having regard to the unjust financial treatment to which Ireland has been for many years subjected, with disastrous results to that country, declines to read a second time this Bill, which contains no proposal for effectually remedying that grievance, and does contain provisions which would continue it."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Elliot (*Durham*) 319
Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 324
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 327
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 328
Mr. Parker Smith (*Lanarkshire, Partick*) 336

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Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 338
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 342
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 346
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 353

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 238; Noes, 155. (Division List No. 158.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 10).

EDUCATION (LOCAL AUTHORITY DEFAULT) ACT, 1904 (MERIONETH).

Mr. Osmond Williams (Merionethshire) 363
Sir Alfred Thomas (Glamorganshire, E.) 367

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Osmond Williams.*)

Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) 370
Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District) 374
Mr. Duke (Plymouth) 379
Mr. Ellis Griffith (Anglesey) 381
Lieut.-Col. Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Boroughs) 383
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir Wm. Anson, Oxford University) 384
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 391

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 113; Noes, 211. (Division List No. 159.)

Naval Lands (Volunteers) Bill. [SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) 401

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Parliamentary Secretary of the Treasury (*Sir A. Acland-Hood. Somersetshire, Wellington*) 401

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 403
Mr. Churchill (*Oldham*) 403
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 403
Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 404
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 404

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at thirteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 16TH MAY, 190

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for the Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill. And that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill ought to be dispensed with. Read, and agreed to 405

Earl of Stamford's Cheshire Estate Bill [H.L.].—Judges' Report received; Bill presented, and read 1ª 405

Great Eastern Railway Bill.—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments 405

Loughborough Corporation Bill.—Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Wrexham Gas Bill; Weaver Navigation Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 405

Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill.—Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill. Reported, without Amendment 405

Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.].—The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 3rd of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 405

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 405

Commercial Union Assurance Bill [H.L.] —Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Truro Water Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to 405

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.].—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order) 405

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 406

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.].—Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to Order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª on Friday next 406

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.—Petitions for early closing of: of Vestry meeting of St. Marks, Barrow-in-Furness; Gosport Congregational Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour; Balham and Upper Tooting Branch of the Women's Total Abstinence Union. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 406

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].—Petitions in favour of; of the National Temperance Federation; Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars; Anglo-Indian Temperance Association; Executive Committee of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Temperance Association; Vestry meeting of St. Mark's, Barrow-in-Furness. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 406

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

JOURNAL COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the One hundred and thirty-sixth Volume of the Journals (4th Edward VII., 1904), with an Index, was ready for delivery; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and the said Volume ordered to be delivered in the same manner as the preceding Volumes of the Journals have been delivered 406

CEYLON.—Papers relating to the education of immigrant Tamil coolie children employed on estates. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 406

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That they have added the Lord Newton to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 407

Workmen's Compensation Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House, and by the Standing Committee, to be received on Monday next, and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 74) 407

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR).

Lord Coleridge 407

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to the importation of Chinese indentured labourers into the Transvaal, and to the conditions under which they are being imported into and are living in the Transvaal.—(*The Lord Coleridge.*)

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 419
Earl Carrington 431

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The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 438
The Earl of Minto 442
Lord Stanmore 444
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 447
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 450
The Marquess of Ripon 454

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at five minutes past Eight o'clock, till Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 16TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as DEPUTY-SPEAKER, pursuant to the Standing Order 459

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Highland Railway Bill; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 459

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill; Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday 459

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Read a second time, and committed 459

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Cheltenham and Horsham (Rural)," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 222] 459

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Southampton Incorporation," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 223] .. 460

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STANDING ORDERS.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the Wigan Corporation Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their Additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

3. "That, in the case of the Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their Additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

4. "That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways) Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First three Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table 460

Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Clancy*) 460

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Amendment to Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to remove doubts as to the validity of a certain Decree, dated twenty-second November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, of the High Court of Justice (Probate Divorce and Admiralty Division) dissolving the Marriage solemnised on the eleventh July, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-two, between John Richard Malone and Charlotte Mildred Malone, then Charlotte Mildred Yarde-Buller, Spinster, and to confirm the said Decree." [Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Charles George Gamble (formerly of No. 14, Rostrevor Terrace, Orwell Road, Rathgar, but now of Mount Jerome House, both in the county of Dublin, and of 39, Fleet Street, in the city of Dublin), Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Judicature, Ireland, with Ida Gertrude Gamble, his now wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other purposes." [Gamble's Divorce Bill. [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Jane Sarah Victoria Lautour, of Ansty House, Erdington, in the county of Warwick, with Ernest Lautour, her husband, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes." Lautour's Divorce Bill. [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the County Council of Middlesex to pay certain sums agreed to be paid by them to the Alexandra Park Trustees; and for other purposes." [Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords].] 461

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Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 461

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords]; Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 461

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EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Reigate, in favour; to lie upon the Table 462

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JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Old Monkland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 462

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PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.—Petition from Paisley, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 462

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petition of Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table 462

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.—Petition from Paisley, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 462

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LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SCOTLAND (TECHNICAL EDUCATION).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th June, 1904; *Mr. Graham Murray*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 165.] 462

UGANDA RAILWAY ACTS, 1896 AND 1902.—Account presented, showing the money issued from the Consolidated Fund under the provisions of the Uganda Railway Acts, 1896 (59 and 60 Vic., c. 38), and 1902 (2 Edw. 7, c. 40), and of the money expended and borrowed, and Securities created under the said Acts, to 31st March, 1904, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 166.] 463

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POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).—Copy presented of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14) Warrant, 1905, dated 22nd March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 463

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Public Records (Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments). Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act] 463

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.—Address for "Return showing the number of Experiments performed on Living Animals during the year 1904, under licences granted under the Act, 39 and 40 Vic. 3. 77, distinguishing painless from painful experiments (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 183, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*) 464

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Return ordered, "showing (1) the names of the Lay Assistant Commissioners acting as Purchase Inspectors under the Land Purchase Acts; (2) date of original Appointment; (3) date upon which Appointment expires; (4) age on Appointment; (5) residence at time of Appointment; (6) Locality in which practical experience of Land was acquired; (7) where Educated; (8) previous Occupation; (9) acreage of Land farmed; (10) whether held as Owner or Tenant; (11) what other experience in Agriculture; and (12) what experience in Valuing, Mapping, and Surveying; and like Particulars with reference to others than Lay Assistant Commissioners, if any, who have been appointed Inspectors under The Land Purchase Act, 1903."—(*Mr. Delany.*) 464

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Arthur Stanley (Lancashire, Ormskirk), Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe), and Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 498

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.—Ordered, That the Evidence of the Select Committee on Workmen's Trains in Session 1904 be referred to the Select Committee on Workmen's Trains.—(*Colonel Bowles.*) 500

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland Bill: Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, and had appointed in substitution, Mr. MacVeagh. 501
Report to lie upon the Table.

Finance Bill.—[SECOND READING].—
Question again proposed.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [15th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 501
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 509
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 515
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 518
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 526
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 532
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Lord George Hamilton (Middlesex, Ealing) 540
Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.) 543
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 548
Mr. Blake (Longford, S.) 551
Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 557

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Thames Conservancy Bill (BY ORDER).—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Grenfell (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe) 560

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir James Joicey (Durham, Chester-le-Street) 569
Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 570
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 571
Mr. David Morgan (Essex, Walthamstow) 572
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Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 577
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Sir John Brunner (Cheshire, Northwich) 581

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Captain Jessel (St. Pancras, S.) 582

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an instruction to the Committee on the Bill to insert a clause to provide that the Conservators of the River Thames shall make compensation to all persons whose property or works are damaged by or in consequence of any operations of the Conservators in connection with dredging or otherwise deepening and improving the channels within the limits defined by the Bill, and to provide that any dispute or difference arising therefrom shall be settled by arbitration under the Arbitration Act, 1889."—(*Captain Jessel.*)

Mr. John Burns 582

Question put, and negatived.

Finance Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [15th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Channing 582
Mr. John Wilson (*Falkirk Burghs*) 585
Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 587
Mr. Soares (*Devonshire Barnstaple*) 591
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 594
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 598
Mr. Harwood (*Bolton*) 601

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 155 ; Noes, 99. (Division List No. 160.)]

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at eighteen minutes before One O'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 17TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order 605

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hastings Harbour Bill [LORDS].—(King's Consent signified)—Bill read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 605

Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [LORDS].—Considered ; to be read the third time 605

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Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 605

Railway Bills (Group 2).—Ordered, that Captain John Whitby Dixon, R.N., do attend the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills, this day at Three of the clock 605

Private Bills (Group E.)—Ordered, That T. W. E. Higgens do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills To-morrow, at Eleven of the clock 606

Railway Bills (Group 4).—Ordered, That Mr. William S. Green do attend the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills on Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock 606

Liverpool Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 606

Skegness Water Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 606

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Reported from the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, without Amendment. Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time 606

PETITIONS.

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill.—Petition from Inverness, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 607

Dogs (Protection) Bill.—Petition from Yorkshire in favour; to lie upon the Table 607

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 607

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from St. Leonard's-on-Sea, against; to lie upon the Table 607

Milk Depôts (London) Bill.—Petition from Bermondsey in favour; to lie upon the Table 607

Teinds and Fiars Prices (Scotland)—Petition from Inverness, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 607

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Army (Medical Department).—Copy presented, of Report for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 607

East India (Financial Statement).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 8th May; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 167] 607

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TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series Nos. 3375 and 3376 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 607

AMERICAN MAILS.—Return ordered, "showing the number of days, hours, and minutes occupied in the transit of the Royal Mails, both outward and inward, carried during the year 1904 by Steamships between Queenstown and New York, between Southampton and New York, and between New York and Plymouth. The Return to specify the names of the Steamers and to indicate by asterisk or otherwise those not carrying mails under contract."—(*Sir John Leng*) 607

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROCLAIMED MEETING AT CAPATAGLE—POLICE AND MR. ROCHE, M.P.—Question, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 608

SURGEONS IN THE ROYAL NAVY.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 609

TURBARY TRUSTEES ON THE KING-HARMAN ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Tully (Leitrim, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 609

REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE PARISH OF ORG, ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 610

ANNUAL INCOME OF TRUSTS APPOINTED UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 610

SUNDAY DUTY OF GLASGOW FEMALE TELEPHONE STAFF.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Stanley 610

HOLIDAYS IN LIEU OF BANK HOLIDAYS—CASE OF MR. ALEXANDRA, TELEGRAPHIST OF MANCHESTER.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Lord Stanley 611

INQUIRIES FOR NEXT OF KIN OF THE LATE HELEN BLAKE.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 611

DRAINAGE CHARGE ON HOLDING OF MR. LAWRENCE HUGHES OF DERRYCASSAN, COUNTY CAVAN.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 612

ABSTRACTORS AND ASSISTANT CLERKS IN THE GENERAL REGISTER AND RECORD OFFICE OF SHIPPING AND SEAMAN.—Question, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 612

IMMIGRANT TAX ON ENTRY INTO UNITED STATES, CALAIS AND BOULOGNE.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 613

UNCERTIFIED DEATHS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 613

PUNISHMENT OF REFRACTORY CHINESE COOLIES IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 613

BRITISH INDIANS IN CAPE COLONY—LANGUAGE QUESTION.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 614

JAMES COX, LATE INNISKILLEN FUSILIERS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 614

ALLEGED DISSATISFACTION AMONG MEN OF THE ARMY SERVICE CORPS AT LONGFORD.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 615

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

MILITIA TRAINING—LANARKSHIRE REGIMENTS.—Question, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk Burghs); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 615

NATIVE LABOUR IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MINES.—Questions, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 616

INDIAN ARMY ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 616

METROPOLITAN POLICE—REGULATION OF MOTOR TRAFFIC.—Questions, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.); Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Mr. Scott-Montagu (Hampshire, New Forest); and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 617

MOTOR TRAFFIC—Questions, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answers, Mr. Scott-Montagu 618

POLICE PENSIONS.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 619

HEAVY MOTOR TRAFFIC ORDER.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 619

METROPOLITAN PNEUMATIC DESPATCH BILL.—Question, Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 620

HOLIDAYS IN THE POST OFFICE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Lord Stanley 620

POST OFFICE—UNESTABLISHED LINESMEN'S GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Lord Stanley 621

APPLICATON FOR A LICENCE AT THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, HAMMERSMITH.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Sir Lees Knowles (Salford, W.) 622

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DALKEY INCOME-TAX DISPUTE.—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 623

RIVER RIFFEY FLOODS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 623

DUBLIN LAW COURTS' CLERKSHIPS.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 624

MACONOCHY ESTATE, COUNTY LONGFORD.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 625

ALLEGED INCITEMENT TO BOYCOTTING AT DRUMMULLAN.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 625

IRISH AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—VETERINARY BRANCH.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 626

LOUGH NEAGH DRAINAGE.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 626

DOMICILIARY POLICE VISITS AT ATHENRY.—Questions, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Captain Donelan, Mr. Blake (Longford, S.); and Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 627

THE COMMITTEE OF DEFENCE.—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Sir Henry Fowler; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 628

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Amendment again proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out the words 'one thousand nine hundred and ten,' and insert the words 'until Parliament shall otherwise determine.'"—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'one thousand nine hundred and ten' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 631
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 632
Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.) 633
Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton) 636
Mr. Chaplin (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 637
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 640
Mr. Mildmay (Devonshire, Totnes) 641

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Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice (Wiltshire, Cricklade) 642
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 643
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 644
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 645
Dr. Hutchinson (Sussex, Rye) 646
Lieut.-Col. Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Boroughs) 647
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 647
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) 648
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 649

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 266 ; Noes, 80. (Division List No. 161).

Motion made and Question proposed "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 653
Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) 656
Mr. Lloyd-George 657
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 663
Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) 665
Mr. Benn (Devonport) 665
Mr. Toulmin (Bury, Lancashire) 666
Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 667
Mr. A. K. Loyd (Berkshire, Abingdon) 668
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 670
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 672
Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice 673
Mr. Dalziel 675
Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbrightshire) 677
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 678
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 680

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 244 ; Noes, 86. (Division List No. 162).

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Government Ships Bill.—Second Reading—Order for Second Reading read.

The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) .. 685

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 686
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 687
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 688
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 689
The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 690
Mr. Blake (Longford, S.) 692
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 693

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

EVENING SITTING.

WEST INDIAN COLONIES (ADMINISTRATION).

Mr. Lamont (*Buteshire*) 694

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to extend federal institutions in the British West Indies, in order to improve and to cheapen the administration of those colonies."—(*Mr. Lamont.*)

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 699

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'no change in the institutions of the British West Indies will be satisfactory which does not recognise the predominant interest of the majority of the taxpayers in the administration of the Colonies.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 705
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 709
Mr. Randles (*Cumberland, Cockermouth*) 711
Mr. Cathcart Wason (*Orkney and Shetland*) 713
Mr. Lawrence (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 714
Sir Brampton Gurdon (*Norfolk, N.*) 715
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington*) 716
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 721

Amendment and Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

HEAVY MOTOR-CAR REGULATIONS.

Mr. Gardner (*Berkshire, Wokingham*) 724

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present—

House was adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve of the clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 18TH MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Baker Street and Waterloo Railway; Edgware and Hampstead Railway; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway; Andover Lighting and Power.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 725

City of London Electric Lighting Company Bill [H.L.]; East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Charing Cross and Strand Electricity Supply Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bills; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 725

South Suburban Gas Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill.—Reported, without Amendment 725

Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; University College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Seaham Gas Bill.—Reported with Amendments .. 725

South Metropolitan Gas Bill; Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [H.L.]; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment 725

Corbett Estate Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} 725

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 725

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 725

Aylesbury Gas Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 725

Ealing Corporation Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 726

South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 726

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection .. 726

Halifax Corporation Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 726

Stockport Corporation Bill; Bristol Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 726

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 726

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed 726

Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [H.L.]; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill.—The King's consent signified; and Bills reported, with Amendments 726

Morley Corporation Bill.—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 11th of April and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next 726

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Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.].—Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again till Monday next 726

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 726

Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to .. 727

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill (No. 77); Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill (No. 78).—Brought from the Commons, and read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2ª and reported from the Committee 727

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3375. Zanzibar (Pemba).

No. 3376. Persia (Khorassan). 727

ARMY (MEDICAL DEPARTMENT).—Report for the year 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 727

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Two Orders in Council of May 10th, 1905, varying the establishment of the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses and the Commissioners of Irish Lights respectively 727

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.—Order in Council of May 10th, 1905, directing that the Extradition Acts, 1870 to 1895, shall apply to the case of Cuba 727

PUBLIC RECORDS (OFFICE OF LAND REVENUE RECORDS AND ENROLMENTS).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office 727

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA).—Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905, No. 231. The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14) Warrant, 1905 727

POLLING DISTRICTS. (County of Northumberland).—Order made by the County Council of the County of Northumberland, altering certain polling districts in the Wansbeck Parliamentary Division.

(West Riding of Yorkshire). Order made by the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire, altering certain polling districts in the Doncaster, Osgoldcross, Rotherham, and Sowerby Parliamentary Divisions.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act) and ordered to lie on the Table 728

LICENSED HOUSES.—Petitions for early closing of; of inhabitants of Penrith (10); Young Men's Christian Association; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 728

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NEW BILLS.

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to extend Section 86 of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877. Was presented by the Lord Ashbourne; read 1a; to be printed; and to be read 2a on Monday next. (No. 75.) 728

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Judicature (Ireland) Acts, 1877 to 1897, and Section 6 of the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, and the law relating to bankrupts and to the constitution of certain election courts in Ireland. Was presented by the Lord Ashbourne; read 1a; to be printed; and to be read 2a on Tuesday next. (No. 76.) 728

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill.—[Second Reading].—Order of the day read for adjourned debate on the Motion for the Second Reading.

The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education (The Marquess of Londonderry) 728
Lord Avebury 729

Moved, "That the debate on the Motion for the Second Reading be adjourned till Tuesday next."

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Loss of the "Banffshire."

Lord Muskerry 729

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 18TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Mr. Speaker's Absence.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon, Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill (No Standing Orders Applicable).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 16th day of May, That, in the case of the following Bill, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill 730

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill; Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill Read the third time, and passed 730

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Local Government Provisional Order (No. 16) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to Sheffield," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 224.] 730

Cork Junction Railways Bill.—Ordered, That the evidence taken before the Committees on the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway (City of Dublin Junction Railways) Bill, 1884, the Cork and Fermoy and Waterford and Wexford Railway Bill, 1890, the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill, 1898, the great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill, 1899, and the great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill, 1900, be referred to the Committee on the Cork Junction Railways Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 730

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of McConnell's Divorce Bill, together with the Documents deposited in the cases, be returned to the House of Lords.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*) 731

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 731

Railway Bills (Group 4).—Ordered, That Alderman Daniel Horgan and Captain L. Bertie Millington do attend the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills on Wednesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock 731

Railway Bills (Group No. 7).—Mr. Bond reported from the Committee on Group No. 7 of Railway Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Twelve of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table 731

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 732

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 732

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 732

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow 732

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow 732

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 732

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Clyde Navigation Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 732

East Cowes Gas Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 732

PETITIONS.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 732

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.—Petition from Salisbury, against; to lie upon the Table 732

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE TO CROPS BILL.—Petition from Argyll, in favour; to lie upon the Table 733

COUNTY COURTS BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 733

DOGS BILL.—Petition from Haverfordwest, against; to lie upon the Table .. 733

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Perth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 733

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table 733

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.—Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table 733

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Argyll, in favour; to lie upon the Table.. 733

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Salisbury, against; to lie upon the Table 733

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 733

MORTGAGE OF PREMISES BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 733

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 733

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.. 733

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Argyll, in favour; to lie upon the Table 733

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF NORTHUMBERLAND).—Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Northumberland altering certain Polling Districts in the Wansbeck Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 734

POLLING DISTRICTS (WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE).—Copy presented of Order made by the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire altering certain Polling Districts in the Doncaster, Osgoldcross, Rotherham, and Sowerby Parliamentary Divisions [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 734

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords], and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158b]; referred to the Committee n the Bill 734

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of the 10th May, 1905, varying the Establishments of the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, respectively [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 734

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 10th May, 1905, directing that the Extradition Acts, 1870 to 1895, shall apply in the case of Cuba [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 734

FLAX AND LINEN FACTORIES.—Address for "Return of the number of Flax and Linen Factories in the United Kingdom subject to inspection under The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, and the number of Spindles and Looms used in such Factories."—(*Mr. Wolff*) 734

PARISH MEDICAL OFFICERS (SCOTLAND).—Return ordered, "showing for each Parish in Scotland as at the 1st day of December, 1902, the salaries and fees paid to outdoor Medical Officers under the Poor Law, Lunacy, and Vaccination Acts, and the arrangements made by the parish council for supplying medicines and medical appliances to poor persons."—(*Mr. Charles Douglas.*) 734

INCOME-TAX ASSESSMENTS.—Return ordered, "of the number of Assessments to the Income-Tax for the years ending the 5th day of April, 1902 and 1903 (in the same classes and in the same amounts as stated in and in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 314, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir George Bartley.*) 735

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YIELD OF FOREIGN CIGARETTE DUTY.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 742

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IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD AUDITORS.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 767

CONSTABLE MASTERSON, R.I.C.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 767

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MILITIA BILL.—Question, Mr. Griffith Boscawen; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 776

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD VOTE.—Questions, Mr. Arthur Stanley (Lancashire, Ormskirk); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 776

REORGANISATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.—Question, Sir Ernest Flower (Bradford, W.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 776

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 777

Drunkenness (Ireland) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 168.]
Minutes of the proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 168.]

Bill as amended (in Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 26th May, and to be printed. [Bill 225] 777

SUPPLY [7TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1905–6.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charge connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during th year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (*Mr. Arthur Lee, Hants, Fareham*) .. 778
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) .. 778
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) .. 780
Mr. Thomas Shaw (*Hawick Burghs*) .. 782
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) .. 785
Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) .. 788
Mr. Gibson Bowles .. 789
Mr. Edmund Robertson .. 790
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) .. 791
Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness*) .. 796
Mr. Arthur Lee .. 796
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) .. 801
The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge*) .. 803
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) .. 805
Mr. Black (*Banffshire*) .. 807
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) .. 809
Mr. Benn (*Devonport*) .. 809
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) .. 810

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries and Allowances of Superintending Officers and others) be reduced by £510."—(*Mr. Whitley*).

Mr. Bright (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) .. 811
Mr. Arthur Lee .. 812
Mr. Gibson Bowles .. 813
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) .. 813
Mr. Labouchere (*Northampton*) .. 814
Mr. Charles Devlin (*Galway*) .. 815

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 118 ; Noes, 202. (Division List No. 163.)

Mr. Courtney Warner .. 819
Mr. Arthur Lee .. 819

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Whitley .. 820
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) .. 820

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Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 821
Mr. Courtenay Warner 822
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 823
Mr. Dillon 824
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 824
Mr. Dalziel 826

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means from the remainder of this day's Sitting, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, the Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [7TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.), in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.—Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Mr. Whitley 880

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That Item D (Victualling Yards) be reduced by £550."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping) 829
Mr. Morrison (Wiltshire, Wilton) 829
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 830
Mr. Bromley Davenport 830
Mr. Renwick (Newcastle-on-Tyne) 831
Mr. W. Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 831
Mr. Mooney 832
Mr. Dillon 833
Mr. Dalziel 833
Mr. Pretyman 835
Mr. McCrae 836
Mr. Dillon 836
Mr. Soares 836

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 101 ; Noes, 151. (Division List No. 164.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Whitley 839

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Naval Barracks and General Fleet Services) be reduced by £15,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Mr. Shackleton (*Lancashire, Clitheroe*) 840
Mr. Mooney 841
Mr. Arthur Lee 842
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 842

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 95 ; Noes, 151. (Division List No. 165.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £336,400, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Mr. Swift MacNeill 846

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages, and Allowances) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Mr. Pretyman 849
Mr. Benn 851

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*) put and agreed to.

Adjourned at seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, FRIDAY, MAY 19TH, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the Petition for additional provision in the following Bill :—Wellingborough and District Tramroads Electricity Supply [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table .. 853

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Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—(Petition for additional provision). Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next 853

Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 853

Birmingham Corporation Bill.—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on May 11th discharged, and Bill committed 853

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 853

Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill; Chelsea ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BILL. Read 3ª, and passed 853

Wrexham Gas Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 853

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Various Powers) Bill [H.L.]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill.—Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit on Monday next till half-past Twelve o'clock 853

Great Northern Railway Bill.—Report from the Select Committee, that the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 11th May discharged, and Bill committed 854

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Minutes of evidence and proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited, returned from the Commons 854

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next 854

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 854

Arbroath Water Order Confirmation Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2ª (The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)), and reported from the Committee. (No. 79) 854

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill (No. 80); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill (No. 81); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill (No. 82).—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners 854

Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Ealing Corporation Bill; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Stockport Corporation Bill; Bristol Corporation Bill; Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill; Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; London Gas Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—D. Wellington, M. Winchester, E. Rosse, E. Gainsborough, L. Newton (Chairman); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 854

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*) be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Ravensworth; read, and agreed to 855

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Ridley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Yarborough; read and agreed to 855

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Fee Fund of the House of Lords.—The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid on the Table the Annual Accounts of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords. The same was ordered to lie on the Table, and to be referred to the Select Committee of the House of Lords Offices 855

Poor Relief (Scotland).—Report to the Local Government Board for Scotland on the methods of administering poor relief in certain large town parishes of Scotland 855

Education (Scotland).—Reports, statistics, etc., on Continuation Classes (Scotland), 1903–1904 856

Trinity College, Dublin, Estates Commission

Report of the Commissioners.

Appendix and minutes of evidence; with appendices and maps.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 856

Medway Conservancy.—Statement of receipts and expenditure by the Conservators for the year ended March 25th, 1905. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 856

Licensed Houses.—Petition for early closing of; of Reading and District Temperance Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 856

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.].

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 856

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 19TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

Mr. Speaker's Absence.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords] Standing Orders Applicable thereto not complied with).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have not been complied with, viz.:—Great Central Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 857

Provisional Order Bills (Standing Orders Applicable thereto complied with).—Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time upon Monday next .. . 857

Highland Railway Bill.—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.] .. 857

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 857

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill.—As amended, considered; Clauses added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 857

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Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read the third time, and passed 857

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 858

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 6).—Mr. KEARLEY reported from the Committee on Group No. 6 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table 858

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).—Ordered, That Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Fox do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills on Tuesday next, at Eleven of the clock 858

Bootle Corporation Bill.—The CHAIRMAN of WAYS AND MEANS, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 83 relating to Private Bills, informed the House that, in his opinion the Bootle Corporation Bill, though unopposed, ought to be treated as an opposed Bill 858

PETITIONS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).—Petition of E. C. Wolstenholme Elmy, and others for alteration; to lie upon the Table 858

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).—Petition from King's Lynn for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 858

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION) BILL.—Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table 859

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.—Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table 859

WAGES BOARDS BILL.—Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table 859

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POOR RELIEF (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Report to the Local Government Board for Scotland on the methods of administering Poor Relief in certain large town parishes of Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 859

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CONTINUATION CLASSES).—Copy presented, of Reports, Statistics, etc., on Continuation Classes (Scotland), 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 859

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, ESTATES COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Report of the Commissioners [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 859

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, ESTATES COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Appendix to Report of the Commissioners, Minutes of Evidence, with Appendices and Maps [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 859

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PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Medway Conservancy. Copy of Statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the Conservators for the year ending March 25th, 1905 [by Act] 859

MILITIA (SERVICE OUTSIDE UNITED KINGDOM).—Address for "Return showing—

"(1) The number of Militia units and the number of officers and men serving in the Militia on the 1st day of January, 1900.

"(2) The number of Militia units and the number of officers and men, excluding the Militia Reserve, who served outside the United Kingdom at any time between October, 1899, and June, 1902, distinguishing those who served (a) in South Africa; (b) at Mediterranean or other stations outside the United Kingdom.

"(3) The number of Militia Reserve who served in South Africa."—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*) 860

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROSECUTION OF POACHERS—INTERFERENCE OF FISHERIES BRANCH OF THE IRISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.—Question, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 860

POSTAL FACILITIES FOR CUT FLOWERS FROM CAHERDANIEL, COUNTY KERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 861

PAYMENT OF SALARIES OF NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS BY DUBLIN SORTING CLERKS AND TELEGRAPHISTS.—Question, Mr Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Lord Stanley 861

ADMIRALTY—DISMISSAL OF MR. MILLARD.—Question, Mr. Lloyd George (Carnarvon Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Arthur Lee 861

REGULATION OF MOTOR TRAFFIC IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 862

IRISH EVICTED TENANTS—APPLICATIONS FOR REINSTATEMENT FROM PATRICK O'NEILL AND DENIS O'CONNELL.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 863

NEGOTIATIONS FOR PURCHASE OF SIR J. GORE-BOOTH'S ESTATE.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 863

MANUAL INSTRUCTION IN IRISH SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. O'Malley (Galway, Connemara); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 863

GUYS AND WAVENEYS SCHOOLS, BALLYMENA.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 864

ADVANCES TO LORD DUNRAVEN'S TOWN TENANTS IN CROOM, COUNTY LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. O'Shaugnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 864

ASSISTANT CLERKS (ABSTRACTORS CLASS)—BENEFITS OF NEW SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 865

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the follownig Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill:—Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Jordan; and had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Higham and Mr. Joyce 685

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of York (North Riding, Whitby Division), in the room of Ernest William Beckett, esquire, now Baron Grimthorpe.—(*Mr. H. W. Forster.*) 865

Land Values (Taxation) Scotland Bill.—[SECOND READING.].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Ainsworth (*Argyllshire*) 866

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart (*Renfrew, E.*) 873
Mr. Baird (*Glasgow, Central*) 876

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Crombie (*Kincardineshire*) 878
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 879
Sir Charles Renshaw (*Renfrew, W.*) 886
Mr. Findlay (*Lanarkshire, N.E.*) 891
Sir William Arrol (*Ayrshire, S.*) 891
Mr. Charles Douglas (*Lanarkshire, N.W.*) 894
Mr. Hozier (*Lanark, S.*) 896
Mr. Thomas Shaw (*Hawick Burghs*) 900
The Lord Advocate (*Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton*) 906

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 145; Noes, 131. (Division List No. 166.)

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 143; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 167).

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Wherupon Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at thirty-five minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 22ND MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway; London United Tramways (Extension of Time).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 917

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.].—Leave given to the Select Committee to continue sitting in the absence of the Lord Monk Bretton 917

Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 917

Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 917

Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 917

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 917

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Leave was given to the Select Committee not to sit To-morrow till Two o'clock 917

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Cloncurry be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*); read, and agreed to.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Clifden be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Monk Bretton; read, and agreed to 918

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Andover Lighting and Power Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 918

Weaver Navigation Bill [H.L.]; Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons 918

Epping Bas Bill.—Read 3^{a}, and passed.

Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill.—Read 3^{a}, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 918

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Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons .. ..

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Brought from the Commons 918

Highland Railway Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 918

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.. 918

Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Hill and the Lord Clinton be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Clifden and the Viscount Ridley; read, and agreed to 918

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 84) 919

PETITION.

Licensed Houses.—Petition for early closing of; of public meeting at Carlingcot; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 919

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Colonies (Annual).—No. 447. Bermuda. Report for 1904 919

Fisheries (Ireland).—Report of the Department of Agricultural and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the sea and inland fisheries of Ireland, for the years 1902 and 1903. Part II. Scientific investigations 919

India (Afghanistan).—Treaty between the British Government and the Amir of Afghanistan, dated 21st March, 1905; with Papers relating thereto .. 919

Trade Reports (Annual Series).

No. 337. Japan.

No. 3378. France (Cochin China).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 919

Post Office (Post Office Savings Banks): Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905.—The Post Office Savings Bank Regulations, 1905, dated 15th May, 1905. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 917

NEW BILL.

Extradition Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to include bribery amongst extradition crimes. Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next. (No. 83) 920

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Workmen's Compensation Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order). A further Amendment moved; objected to; and, on Question, disagreed to. An Amendment moved, and (by leave of the House) withdrawn. An Amendment made. Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next; and to be printed as amended. (No. 85) 920

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 920

BRITISH SHIPPING TRADE—FOREIGN RESERVATIONS AND ENCROACHMENTS.

Lord Muskerry 920
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 925

Workmen's Compensation Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order).

Lord Heneage 931

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 37, to leave out the word 'six' and insert the word 'nine.'"—(*Lord Heneage.*)

Lord Belper 932
The Marquess of Ripon 933

On Question, Amendment negatived.

Viscount Cross 933
The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 934

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 23, page 16, to leave out Sub-section (4), and to insert the the following new sub-sections: '(4) Every enactment and word of this Act which is expressed to be substituted for or added to any portion of the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, shall form part of those Acts respectively in the place assigned to it by this Act, and those Acts, and all Acts, including this Act, which refer thereto shall, after the commencement of and subject to the savings contained in this Act, be construed as if the said enactment or word had been originally enacted in the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, as the case may be, in the place so assigned, and where it is substituted for another enactment or word, had been so enacted in lieu of that enactment or word; and the expression 'this Act' as used in the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, or this Act, shall be construed accordingly. '(5) A copy of the principal Act and of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, with every such enactment and word inserted in the place so assigned, and with the omission of the parts expressly repealed by this Act, and with the sections and sub-sections numbered in manner directed by this Act, shall be prepared and certified by the Clerk of the Parliaments, and deposited with the Rolls of Parliament; His Majesty's printer shall print in accordance

with the copy so certified all copies of the principal Act and of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, which are printed after the commencement of this Act.' "—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord James of Hereford 936
Lord Thring 936

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next; and to be printed as amended [No. 85.]

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] [SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

* *The Lord Chancellor of Ireland* (*Lord Ashbourne*) 936

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Ashbourne.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 22ND MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of MR. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills. That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 937

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill; London Government Scheme (London and Middlesex) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 938

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PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 938

East Cowes Gas Bill [LORDS]; Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords]; McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords];—read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 938

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 938

London and North Western Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 938

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 938

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 939

Dearne Valley Railway Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 939

Malone's Divorce (Validation Bill [LORDS]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 939

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 5) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 939

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 939

North Eastern Railway Bill; North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed .. 939

Canals Bill. Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Canals Bill with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Sir John Brunner.*) 939

Bolton Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee. with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 939

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 31st May, and to be printed. [Bill 226.] 939

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill; Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill, without Amendment.

Wrexham Gas Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the election of County Councillors." [Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the law relating to the arrangements of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs." [Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [Lords] 939

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (NO. 2) BILL.—Petition from Middlesborough in favour; to lie upon the Table 940

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Westminster in favour; to lie upon the Table 940

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from Atherton in favour; to lie upon the Table 940

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (CHILDREN) BILL.—Petition from Westminster in favour; to lie upon the Table 940

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (AFGHANISTAN).—Copy presented of Treaty between the British Government and the Amir of Afghanistan dated 21st March, 1905. with Papers relating thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 940

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK (REGULATIONS). Copy presented, of the Post Office Savings Bank Regulations, 1905, dated 15th May, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 940

FISHERIES (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1902–3. Part II. Scientific Investigations [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 940

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3377 and 3378 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 941

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS (SOLDIERS AND SAILORS).—Return ordered, "showing the number of Appointments as permanent messengers in the several Government Offices, or in the Palace of Westminster, and as park-keepers or gardeners under the Office of Works, which became vacant between the 1st day of April, 1904, and the 31st day of March, 1905, and the number of persons appointed to fill such posts who had served previously of His Majesty's Army or Navy, in accordance with the recommendations in the Select Committee of 1876–7 and of 1894–5; and showing, further, how many were given employment under the Post Office."—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*) 941

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Discharges at Sheerness Dockyard—Stopping of Overtime Work.—Question, Mr. John Howard (Kent, Faversham); Answer, Mr. Pretyman .. 941

Discharges at Sheerness Dockyard.—Question, Mr. John Howard; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 942

Findings of the International Labour Conference.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas .. 942

Errors in Sectoring of Lights on the Irish Coast.—Question, Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 943

Cheap Mattresses—Insanitary Flock.—Question, Mr. Fuller (Wiltshire, Westbury); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 944

Children in Workhouses and Workhouse Infirmaries.—Question, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour .. 944

Boarded-Out Poor Law Children.—Question, Mr. Melville (Stockport); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 945

Children Emigrated to Canada by Boards of Guardians.—Question, Mr. Toulmin (Bury, Lancashire); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 945

Officials in Edinburgh Post Office over the Regulation Age.—Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, Lord Stanley 946

Auxiliary Rural Postmen entitled to qualify as Rural Postmen.—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, Lord Stanley 947

Appointment of Male Learners to Dublin Post Office.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 947

Irish Portal Veterinary Service Staff—Increased Pay for Back Service.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 947

School Attendance of Children—Obligation of Parents to send Medical Certificate in cases of Absence.—Question, Mr. Hunt (Shropshire, Ludlow); Answer, Sir William Anson 948

Evasions of the Medical and Dentists Act by Limited Companies.—Question, Sir John Tuke (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 948

London and North Western Railways Rehousing Scheme at Regent's Park.—Question, Mr. Graham (St. Pancras, W.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 949

Unstemmed Tobacco.—Question, Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 949

Crossgar (County Down) Water Supply and Sewage System.—Question, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 950

SHERLOCK ESTATE, COUNTY CORK.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 950

PENSION OF JAMES M'KEOGH, LATE SHOEMAKER AT DUNDRUM LUNATIC ASYLUM.—Question, Mr. Mooney; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 950

GRAZING RIGHTS ON GLENNAMADDON MOUNTAIN.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 951

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IRISH AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENTS' HORSE-BREEDING SCHEMES.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 952

PAYMENT OF ARMY OFFICERS THROUGH BANKING AGENTS.—Question, Mr. Atherley-Jones (Durham, N.W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 953

MILITIA AND VOLUNTEER SUBMARINE MINERS.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 954

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BEER MANUFACTURE—ANALYSIS OF INGREDIENTS.—Question, Dr. Hutchison (Sussex, Rye); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 956

NATIONAL DEBT.—Questions, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee), Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.), and Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 957

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MONASTIC CONVENTUAL INSTITUTIONS AND SUCCESSION DUTY.—Question, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 960

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MAGISTRATES AS MOTORISTS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 961

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Parliamentary Agents.—Messrs. Bircham & Company.—Questions, Mr. Benn (Devonport) and Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 962

Poor Law School Children.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 962

Pathological Parcels by Post —Questions, Dr. Hutchison; Answers, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 963

Ex-Soldiers and Sailors in the Postal Service.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Lord Stanley 963

Sea Encroachment on the West Coast.—Question, Lieut.-Col. Tufnell (Essex, S,E.); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 964

Customs Watchers' Grievance.—Questions, Mr. Causton (Southwark, W.); Answers, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Victor Cavendish, (Derbyshire, W.) 964

Solar-Eclipse Expedition.—Questions, Sir William Tomlinson (Preston); Answers, Mr. Victor Cavendish 965

Communication between Parliament Buildings and Westminster Hospital.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 965

British School at Shaw, Lancashire.—Question, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 966

Sneem Steamboat Service.—Questions, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.), and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 966

Insurance of Kerry Fishing Boats.—Questions, Mr. Boland; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 967

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.—Questions, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 968

Cost of Suppressing the Carrowkeel Meeting.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Walter Long.. 968

Proclamation of the Carrowkeel Meeting.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 969

Alleged Police Violence at the Carrowkeel Proclaimed Meeting.—Questions, Mr. Charles Devlin, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.), Mr. Patrick O'Brien and Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answers. Mr. Walter Long 969

South of Ireland Fisheries.—Questions, Mr. Flynn (Cork, E.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 971

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ALLOTMENTS FOR IRISH HERDS.—Question, Captain Nolan (Galway, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 972

IRISH AGRARIAN RETURNS.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 973

TERMS OF IRISH LAND PURCHASE.—Questions, Mr. Flavin and Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answers, Mr. Walter Long and Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.) 973

SUNDAY FOOTBALL IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 974

GAELIC FOOTBALLERS SUNDAY VISIT TO CLONES.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 975

BALBRIGGAN HARBOUR.—Questions, Mr. Clancy (Dublin County, N.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 975

ROSSMACOWEN EVICTION.—Questions, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.), and Mr. McVeagh; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 975

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MORLEY ESTATE, COUNTY CAVAN—TURBARY RIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 977

MORLEY ESTATE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 977

POUNDAGE RATES ON IRISH LAND PAYMENTS.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 978

MONEYMORE DISTURBANCES.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 978

BALLINLONGHANE, GALWAY, FISHERY.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 980

GALWAY HARBOUR LOAN.—Question, Captain Nolan; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 980

LIMERICK POST OFFICE—WAGE SCALE.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Lord Stanley 981

MALE LEARNERS IN THE LIMERICK POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Joyce; Answer, Lord Stanley 981

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VOLUNTEERS AND IMPERIAL DEFENCE.—Questions, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour. Manchester, E.) .. ..

THE SCOTTISH CHURCHES' DISPUTE.—Questions, Mr. Bryce and Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 984

NAVAL AND MILITARY EXPENDITURE.—Questions, Mr. Lough; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 984

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Questions, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple), Mr. Edmund Robertson; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. .. ..

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN rose in his place for the purpose of asking leave to move the adjournment of the House at the Evening Sitting on a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—" To draw attention to the statement made by the Prime Minister that the question of colonial preference may be submitted to the Colonial Conference in 1906 before the country has had an opportunity of expressing its opinion thereon."

But the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen,

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until this Evening's Sitting.

NEW BILL.

Alkali, Etc., Works Bill.—" To consolidate and amend the Alkali, etc., Works Regulation Acts, 1881 and 1892," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Grant Lawon; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 227.]

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [3rd May], " That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should should become binding."—(*Lord Stanley.*) .. ..

Question again proposed.

Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 990
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshre) 1001
Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.) 1002
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1003
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 1006
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1007
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1008
The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) .. 1009
Mr. Blake (Longford, S.) 1011
Sir Charles Dalrymple (Ipswich) 1012
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1012

Amendment proposed—

"In line 5, after the word 'agreement,' to insert the words 'with such Amendments, if any, as may be deemed expedient.' "—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 1015
Sir Christopher Furness (Hartlepool) 1019
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 1020
Lord Stanley 1022

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question amended, in line 4, by inserting, after the word "Report," the words "as to any recommendations thereon," and in line 5, by adding at the end of the Question the words "with or without modifications."

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words, 'and also whether the interests of the employees of the National Telephone Company have been duly considered."—(*Mr. Luke White.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added." .. .. ..

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report as to any recommendations thereon whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding, with or without modifications, and also whether the interests of the employees of the National Telephone Company have been duly considered."

"That Mr. Benn, Lord Bingham, Sir Horatio Davies, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Helme, Sir William Holland, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir Charles Renshaw, Colonel Royds, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley be nominated Members of the Committee."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Mr. Dalziel 1026
Lord Stanley 1027

Question put and agreed to.

Moton made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Three be the quorum."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Question, "That Five be the quorum," put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report as to any recommendations thereon whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding, with or without modifications, and also whether the interests of the employees of the National Telephone Company have been duly considered.

Mr. Benn, Lord Bingham, Sir Horatio Davies, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Helme, Sir William Holland, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir Charles Renshaw, Colonel Royds, and Mr. Stuart Wortley nominated members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum (*Lord Stanley*.)

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Mr. Soares (*Devonshire, Barnstaple*) 1028

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 18, to leave out the word 'levied.'"—(*Mr. Soares*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'levied' stand part of the clause."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 1029
Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 1030
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 1030

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 214 ; Noes, 159. (Division List No. 168.)

Mr. Flynn 1033
Mr. Dillon 1036

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 19, to leave out the words 'or Ireland.'"—(*Mr. Flynn*.)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or Ireland' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. Elliot (*Durham*) 1039
Mr. Hemphill (*Tyrone, N.*) 1039

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Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1041
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1043
Mr. Power (Waterford, E.) 1045
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) 1046
Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick) 1047
Mr. Dillon 1049
Mr. Flynn 1049
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 1050

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 234 ; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 169).

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10) (COLONIAL PREFERENCE).

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1053

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1061

And MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER, being of opinion that grave Disorder had arisen in the House, adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 21.

Adjourned accordingly at half- after Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 23RD MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) [H.L.] ; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) [H.L.] ; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) [H.L.] ; Gas Orders Confirmation [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1073

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Petition for additional Provision in the Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to the Committee on the Bill to insert the additional Provision.

Read, and agreed to 1073

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Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill [H.L.].—Presented (pursuant to leave given on Tuesday last); read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners 1073

Stockport Corporation Bill.—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on Thursday and Friday last discharged, and Bill committed 1073

Great Berkhamstead Gas Bill; Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Croydon Gas Bill; Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Reported, with Amendments 1073

South Suburban Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill. Read 3ª, and passed 1074

Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [H.L.]; Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons .. 1074

South Metropolitan Gas Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1074

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to 1074

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 86); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill (No. 87). Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners 1074

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 1074

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next. 1074

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next 1074

East Cowes Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]; McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to 1074

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments 1074

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]; Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House; together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the cases. Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned 1075

Woolwich Borough Council Bill [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Lord Avebury 1075

Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Committee to which the Bill may be referred that they shall strike out Clause 20 of the Bill."—(*Lord Avebury*) .. ..

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Onslow*) 1079
Earl Carrington 1080
Lord James of Hereford 1083
Lord Tweedmouth 1084
Lord Monkswell 1085
The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 1085
Earl Spencer 1086

On Question, Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF SALE) BILL [H.L.].—Petitions in favour of; of inhabitants of Gloucester; Chillenden; Liverpool (two); Stockton-on-Tees; Derby; Glasgow; Reading; Leytonstone; Birmingham (two); Atherton; Croydon; Dorset and Southern Counties Temperance Association; Welsh Good Templars East Anglia Lodge; Probus Society; Bible Christian (Methodist) Church; Summerfield Latter Day Saints; London Good Templars; Kent Temperance Federation; Durham Good Templars (two); Midland Temperance League; Scottish Temperance League; Scotch Good Templars.—Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1087

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.—No. 3379. United States (Porto Rico)]; No. 3380. Western Pacific (Samoa). 1087

COMMERCIAL NO. 2 (1905) (SUEZ CANAL).—Returns of shipping and tonnage, 1902, 1903, and 1904 (in continuation of "Commercial, No. 4 (1904)") .. 1088

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.—Correspondence relating to merchant shipping legislation in Australia and New Zealand.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1088

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Light Railways Act, 1896.—Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade to the 31st December, 1904, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners to the same date. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1088

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No, 2) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of Onslow in the Chair.]
Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Lord Monkswell 1088

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 3 to insert as a new clause, the words 'In settling any question of disputed purchase-money or compensation payable under this Act by the Council, the Court or persons settling the same shall not award any sum of money for or in respect of any improvement, alteration, or building made for or in respect of any interest in the lands created after the 18th day of October, 1904, if in the opinion of such Court or person the improvement, alteration, or building, or the creation of the interest in respect of which the claim is made, was not reasonably necessary, and was made or created with a view of obtaining or increasing compensation under this Act.' "—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*) 1089

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Remaining clause agreed to. Standing Committee negatived: the Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next.

Public Meetings (Facilities) Bill [H.L.]. [Second Reading.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Burghclere 1089

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1095
The Marquess of Londonderry 1099
Earl Spencer 1102
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1102
Lord Burghclere 1103
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1104
Lord Newton 1104

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill. [Second Reading].—Debate on the Motion for the Second Reading, resumed (according to order).

The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education (The Marquess of Londonderry .. 1105
Lord Avebury .. 1105
The Earl of Wemyss .. 1106
The Lord Chancellor for Ireland (*Lord Ashbourne*) .. 1106
Lord de Ros .. 1106

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday next.

House adjourned at five minutes past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 23RD MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Mr. Speaker's Absence.

The House being met, the Clerk that the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords]; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill; Liverpool Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time .. 1107

Latour's Divorce Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed .. 1107

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill; London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill; London Government Scheme (London and Middlesex) Bill. Read a second time, and committed .. 1107

Dublin United Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed .. 1107

Malone's Divorce Validation Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That a message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House Copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with the Documents deposited in the cases, of Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords].

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Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bills if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General*) 1107

Railway Bills (Group 7).—Mr. Bond reported from the Committee on Group 7 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday at Twelve of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1108

Standing Orders.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee—

1. "That in the case of the Great Central Railway Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. "That, in the case of the Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company's Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to 1108

Private Bills (Group E).—Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties the Committee had adjourned till Thursday, at Eleven of the clock

Report to lie upon the Table. 1108

Message from the Lords.—Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and of Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords], as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned.

That they have agreed to—Epping Gas Bill, without Amendment.

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill, with an Amendment.

Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to enable the Weaver Navigation Trustees to improve their lift at Anderton, and to raise further moneys; and to confer further powers upon the Cheshire County Council with reference to such moneys; and for other purposes." [Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to Adolph Leven in respect of an invention for Improvements in appliances for protection against Projectiles." [Leven's Patent Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to regulate the capital of the Darien Gold Mining Company, Limited; and for other purposes." [Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords] 1108

Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords]; Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]; Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1109

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.—Petition from Douglas Water, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1109

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1109

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petition from Hull, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1109

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 447 (Bermuda, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1110

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Merchant Shipping Legislation in Australia and New Zealand [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1110

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1904, and of the Proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 169.] 1110

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 16th May; *Mr. Cochrane*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 170] 1110

SUEZ CANAL (COMMERCIAL, No. 2, 1905).—Copy presented, of Returns of Shipping and Tonnage passing through the Suez Canal 1902, 1903, and 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1110

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3379 and 3380 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1110

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

UGANDA POLL TAX ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1110

IMPORTATION OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR INTO THE LAGOS HINTERLAND.—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1111

ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE COLONIAL OFFICE WAITING ROOM.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1112

COMPULSORY VACCINATION OF PUPIL TEACHERS IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1112

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Corner in Pig-Iron at Middlesborough.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1113

Norton (Isle of Wight) Outfall Sewer.—Question, Mr. Martin (Worcestershire, Droitwich); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1113

Increased Annual Leave and Annual Increments for Assistant Clerks' (Abstraction Class).—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1114

Medical and Dental Practitioners struck off Register for Misconduct.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1114

Materials used in the Manufacture of Beer—Board of Inland Revenue Cautions.—Question, Dr. Hutchinson (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1115

Erection of New Buildings at Glasnevin—Irish Slates.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer. Mr. Walter Long 1115

Compensation for Injuries to Volunteer Officers while on Duty.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1116

Insanitary Condition of the Island of Lewis.—Date of Second Reading of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1116

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Unanswered Questions.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Lyttelton (Warwick and Leamington 1117

Torpedo School at Sheerness.—Question, Mr. John Howard (Kent, Faversham; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty, Mr. Pretyman (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1117

School of Gunnery—Removal to Chatham.—Questions, Mr. John Howard; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1118

Employment in Government Departments for Ex-soldiers.—Question, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford); Answer, The Secretary of State for War, Mr. Arnold-Forster (Belfast, W.) 1118

Cost of Military Prisons.—Question, Captain Donelan (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1118

Fortifications of London.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office, Mr. Bromley Davenport (Cheshire, Macclesfield) 1119

India—The Recent Earthquake—Ghoorka Losses.—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Brodrick (Surrey, Guildford) 1119

MOSQUITOS AND YELLOW FEVER—MEXICAN REMEDY.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1119

CONGO COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean; Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1120

INCOME TAX STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire) 1120

UNDERGROUND CABLE TO GLASGOW.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1121

FREIGHT ON PAPER TO NEW ZEALAND.—Question, Mr. Whitley, (Halifax); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1121

NEW GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS IN PARLIAMENT STREET.—Question, Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.); Answer, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 1122

UNTENANTED HOUSES IN GALWAY CITY.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1123

CASE OF SERGEANT-MAJOR MURPHY, CONNAUGHT RANGERS.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1123

WATERVILLE STEAM LAUNDRY.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1123

KERRY TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION SCHEMES.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1123

DOMICILIARY VISITS BY POLICE AT ATHENRY.—Questions, Mr. Dillon, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.), Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.), Mr. Blake (Longford, S.), Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) and Mr. Clancy (Dublin County, N.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1124

HORSE DISEASE IN COUNTY WATERFORD.—Questions, Mr. Power (Waterford, E.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1126

CARNTALL SCHOOLMISTRESS' ACTION.—Questions, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr), Mr. Dillon, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.), Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.), and Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answers, Mr. Walter Long .. 1127

KNOCKLANE (SLIGO) GRAZING RANCH.—Question, Mr. William McKillop (Sligo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1128

THE POLICE AND THE MEMBER FOR EAST GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1129

MOUNTMELLICK ACTION FOR FALSE ARREST.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1130

IRISH AGRARIAN OUTRAGES.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid), Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.), Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Dillon, Mr. MacVeagh, and Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1130

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CHARGE AGAINST CONSTABLE REDDY, ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1132

LAND PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.—Questions, Mr. Flavin; Answers, Mr. Walter Long and Mr. Atkinson 1133

YOUGAL AUXILIARY ASYLUM.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1133

BELFAST POLICE AND MEDICAL ATTENDANCE.—Questions, Mr. Sloan; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1134

IRISH JUDICIAL OFFICERS.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1134

NEWMAN ESTATE, COUNTY CORK.—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1135

SNEEM MAIL DELIVERY.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Lord Stanley .. 1135

IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSIONERS—NEW APPOINTMENTS.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1136

FOREIGN PILOTS IN BRITISH WATERS.—Questions, Captain Norton and Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1136

SCOTTISH CHURCHES DISPUTE—POSITION OF THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND.—Questions, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) and Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1137

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE—VOTE OF CENSURE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford), and Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 1138

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Soares and Mr. Mooney; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Herbert Samuel and Mr. Murphy.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Sir George Fardell.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1139

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 1140

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the word 'sixpence' and insert the word 'fourpence.'"—(*Mr. Soares.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'sixpence' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) 1141
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1142
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1143
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1144
Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough) 1146
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1146
Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) 1147
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1148
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 1149
Mr. J. A. Pease (Essex, Saffron Walden) 1150
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1151
Mr. McCrae 1151
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1152
Mr. J. H. Lewis (Flint Boroughs) 1154
Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 1156

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 217 ; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 170.)

Question put, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 215 ; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 171.)

Clause 2 :—

Mr. Whitley 1163

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out the words 'including the increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act.'"—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1163
Mr. Whitley 1164

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Flynn 1165

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 8, at end to add the words 'Provided, however, that the additional duty of fourpence the pound imposed by Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1900, shall not apply to unmanufactured tobacco imported into Ireland as from the first day of July, nineteen hundred and five.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

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Question proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. Field 1166
Mr. Flavin 1166
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1167
Mr. Flavin 1170
Mr. O'Mara (*Kilkenny, S.*) 1170

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 97 ; Noes, 236. (Division List No. 172.)

Question proposed, " That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 1175
Mr. Whitley 1176
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 1176
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1177
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 1178
Mr. Lough 1178

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 237 ; Noes, 160. (Division List No. 173.)

Clause 3 :—

Mr. Flynn 1183

Amendment proposed—

" In page 2, line 15, at the end, to add the words, 'Provided, however, that the additional duty of sixpence per proof gallon imposed by Section 7 of the Finance Act of 1900 shall not apply to spirits consumed in Ireland.' "—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1184
Mr. Mooney (*Dublin County, S.*) 1184

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 73 ; Noes, 283. (Division List No. 174.)

Question, " That the clause stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

Mr. Flynn 1189

Amendment proposed—

" In page 2, line 35, after the word 'charged,' to insert the words 'in Great Britain.' "—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1190
Mr. O'Mara 1190
Mr. Field 1192

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means from the remainder of this day's Sittings.

Whereupon Mr. Jeffreys, the Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 6:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 35, after the word 'charged,' to insert the words 'in Great Britain.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Field 1193
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1194
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 1195
Mr. Field 1195
Mr. O'Mara 1196

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 64; Noes, 162. (Division List No. 175.)

Mr. J. H. Lewis 1197
Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 1202

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 36, to leave out the words, 'one shilling,' and insert the words, 'tenpence, and every person whose total income from all sources upon which income-tax is now paid exceeds five thousand pounds shall pay an additional tax upon the following scale:—Incomes over five thousand pounds up to ten thousand pounds at the rate of one penny; incomes over ten thousand pounds at the rate of twopence.'"—(*Mr. J. H. Lewis.*)

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Question proposed, "That the words 'one shilling' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1206
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1209
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 1209
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 1211

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 188 ; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 176.)

Mr. McCrae 1217

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 36, after the words 'one shilling,' to insert the words, 'provided always that all incomes under Schedule D derived from trades and professions and not derived from investments shall be subject to a rebate of fourpence per pound.'"—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1219
Mr. McKenna 1220
Mr. Slack (*Herts., St. Albans*) 1221

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. McCrae 1221

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 4, after the word 'granted,' to insert the words 'Provided that the following words in Rule 5 of No. 2, Schedule A, s. 60, 5 and 6 Vict., c. 35, 'Of all fines received in consideration of any demise of lands or tenements (not being parcel of a manor or royalty demisable by the custom thereof) on the amount so received within the year preceding by or on account of the party, provided that, in case the party chargeable shall prove to the satisfaction of the Commissioners for General Purposes in the district that such fines, or any part thereof, have been applied as productive capital on which a profit has arisen, or will arise, otherwise chargeable under this Act for the year in which the assessment shall be made, it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners to discharge the amount so applied from the profits liable to assessment under this Rule' shall be read as if the words 'it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners to' were omitted, and instead thereof the words 'the said Commissioners shall' were inserted.'"—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1222

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 1223

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 7, after '1853,' to insert the words 'provided that the value under Schedule B shall be assessed at one-fourth instead of one-third.' "—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1224

Question put, and negatived.

Question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act (1887) Repeal Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn 1224

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 24th MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Speaker's Absence.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. James William Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

New Writ.—For the County of Sussex (South Western or Chichester Division), in the room of Edmund Bernard Talbot, commonly called Lord Edmund Talbot, Commissioner for executing the Office of Treasurer of the Exchequer of Great Britain and Lord High Treasurer of Ireland.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*) 1225

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill (King's Consent Signified).—Bill read the third time, and passed 1225

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1225

Central London Railway Bill (by Order).—Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next 1225

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Railway Bills (Group 4).—Mr. de Tatton Egerton reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That a communication had been received from Mr. Arkwright, one of the members of the said Committee, that he was unable, on account of domestic anxiety, to attend the Committee day.

Report to lie upon the Table 1225

Great Central Railway Bill [Lords].—Report [23rd May] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill to be read a second time 1226

PETITIONS.

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Fearn, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1226

False Statements (Companies) Bill.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Cullicudden, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Prevention of Corruption Bill.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Registration of Firms Bill.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Sale of Butter Bill.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Sunday) Bill.—Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Sheskh, Sultan.—Petition of Sultan Sheskh, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 1226

Street Betting Bill.—Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1226

Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table 1226

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Public Records.—Copy presented of Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1227

Polling Districts (County of Durham).—Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of Durham, altering certain Polling Districts in the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1227

Militia Service outside United Kingdom).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 19th May; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to lie upon the Table 1227

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—

1. Arundel Port. Copy of Annual Report and General Account of the Commissioners of Arundel Port for period from 25th March, 1904, to 25th March, 1905 [by Act].

2. Temporary Laws. Register of Temporary Laws for the Sixth Session, Twenty-seventh Parliament, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, pursuant to Report of the Select Committee on Expiring Laws in Session 1866; to be printed. [No. 171.] 1227

CONSTABULARY FORCE FUND (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "showing Amounts received into and paid out of the Constabulary Force Fund during the period from the 1st day of April, 1887, to the 31st day of March, 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 286, of Session 1887)."—(*Mr. Sloan.*) 1227

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE REGISTRATION OF TEACHERS IN TECHNICAL INSTITUTES.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Sir Wm. Anson 1227

PUBLICATION OF REPORT OF LORD MANSFIELD'S COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1228

POST MORTEMS IN SOUTH WEST LONDON AND CITY OF WESTMINSTER.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1228

NUMBER OF ALIENS NATURALISED FROM 1890-1904.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1228

ALIENS ENTERING THE PORT OF LONDON SUFFERING FROM INFECTIOUS OR CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1230

RELATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO IMPERIAL EXCHEQUER OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1230

PAYMENTS BY THE TREASURY TO THE LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNTS.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1231

CAUTION TO LOCAL SECRETARY OF POSTMEN'S FEDERATION AT FAVERSHAM.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1231

CLASSIFICATION AND MAXIMUM OF PROVINCIAL TOWN AND SUB-OFFICE POSTMEN.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Lord Stanley 1232

PROSECUTION OF MR. MOYNIHAN OF KANTURK FOR NON-PAYMENT OF INCOME-TAX.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. Austin Chamberlain 1233

READJUSTMENT OF THE CHICORY DUTY.—QUESTION, MR. Duncan (Yorkshire, W.R. Otley); Answer, Mr. Austin Chamberlain 1233

ESTABLISHMENT OF A COLLEGE AT SRINAGAR.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1234

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Aden Frontier Expedition—(Grant of a Medal).—Question, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1234

British Indian Trading in South Africa—Language Question.—Question, Mr. Runciman,(Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1234

Promotion of Constable Adams of Bray.—Question, Mr. Cogan (Wicklow, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1235

Reasons for Repatriation of 332 Chinese Labourers.—Question, Mr. Levy; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1235

Discharges from Woolwich Arsenal and Enfield Small Arms Factory.—Question, Mr. John Burns (Battersea); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 1236

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Militia Subalterns.—Question, Colonel Welby (Taunton); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1236

Fatal Rifle Practice at Sheerness.—Question, Mr. Tuff (Rochester); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1236

War Office and Rifle Clubs.—Questions, Mr. Frederick Wilson (Norfolk, Mid); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1237

Chinese Labour Disturbance in the Van Ryn Mine.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1237

The Afghan Treaty.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1238

Cotton as Contraband of War.—Question, Captain Nolan (Galway, N.) and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1238

The Aliens Bill.—Questions, Mr. John Campbell (Armagh, S.), and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Questions, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1239

Adult Night Messengers in the Post Office.—Questions, Mr. Sloan; Answers, The Postmaster-General, Lord Stanley (Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1239

Government Departments and Free Postage.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1240

Swine Fever.—Questions, Mr. Flavin; Answers, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1240

Sheep Scab in Scotland.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 1241

Voters' Disqualifications—Relief for Underfed School Children.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1241

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THE UNEMPLOYED.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour .. 1242

RECKLESS MOTOR-CAR DRIVING.—Question, Mr. Lambert (South Moulton) ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1242

THE PRICE OF SUGAR.—Questions, Mr. Platt-Higgins (Salford, N.) and Mr. Gibson Bowles ; Answers, Mr. Bonar Law 1243

PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS--CLOCK TOWER LIGHTS.—Questions, Colonel Welby ; Answers, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 1244

UNEMPLOYED DIFFICULTY IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie ; Answer, The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1244

NEEDLEWORK IN IRISH SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.) and Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) ; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland 1245

IRISH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.—Question, Mr. Boland ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1246

LAND PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.—Questions, Mr. Flavin ; Answers, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1246

GLEN BREAKWATER AND SLIP, COUNTY KERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland ; Answe,r Mr. Walter Long 1247

ILLEGAL TRAWLING ON THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF IRELAND. —Question, Mr. Boland ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1248

CARLAND NATIONAL SCHOOL, TYRONE.—Question, Mr. Sloan ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1248

MAHON BALLYDONIAN ESTATE.—Questions, Mr. Roche (Galway, E) ; and Mr. MacVeagh, Down, S.) ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1249

Street Betting Bill.—Question, Mr. Sloan ; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1250

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 7 :—

Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1250

Amendment proposed—
" In page 3, line 19, to leave out sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out, to the word ' ten,' in line 22, stand part of the clause."

Colonel Williams (Dorsetshire, W.) 1254
Mr. Ashton, (Bedfordshire, Luton) 1255

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The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1257
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 1263
Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.) 1264
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 1265
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1266
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1267
Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) 1268
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 1268

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 205 ; Noes, 170. (Division List No. 177.)

Mr. McKenna 1273

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 2, to leave out the word 'twenty-eight' and insert the words 'twenty-nine million pounds,' whereof one million pounds shall be paid by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in such manner, by such payments, and under such regulations as the Treasury direct, to the Commissioners of the National Debt out of the proceeds of the estate duty."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty-eight' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1278
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) 1279
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1280
Mr. Cawley 1282
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1284
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 1285
Mr. Ritchie (Croydon) 1288
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 1292
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1295
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 1296

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 226 ; Noes, 181. (Division List No. 178.)

Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1301
Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.) 1304
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 1308
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 1310

Question put.

The Committee divided—Ayes, 201 ; Noes, 162. (Division List No. 179.)

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

ARTERIAL DRAINAGE (IRELAND).

Mr. James O'Connor (*Wicklow, W.*) 1315
Mr. John O'Connor (*Kildare, N.*) 1321

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the indifference of the Government for more than a century to the state of the main Irish rivers having resulted in the frequent flooding of large tracts of country, followed by great destruction of property and serious injury to lands and dwellings and to the public health, it is the duty of the Government to devise and carry out a system of drainage which will afford adequate protection for the lives and property of the people." —(*Mr. James O'Connor.*)

Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1331
Mr. O'Dowd (*Sligo, S.*) 1336
Mr. Delany (*Queen's County, Ossory*) 1339
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 1340
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1343
Mr. Kilbride (*Kildare, S.*) 1345
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 1346

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 79 ; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 189.)

Public Health Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1347

Finance Bill.—Considered in Committee ; Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next 1348

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 25TH MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.].—Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to 1349

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1349

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. Reported, without Amendment 1349

Morley Corporation Bill; Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.]; Brentwood Gas Bill; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]; North Sussex Gas Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments 1349

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Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Clifford of Chudleigh be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Hare (*E. Listowel*); read, and agreed to 1349

Ealing Corporation Bill.—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on Thursday and Friday last discharged, and Bill committed 1349

London United Tramways (Extension of Time Bill).—Read 2^a, and committed 1349

Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1349

Seaham Gas Bill.—Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1349

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill.—Read 3^a, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed and returned to the Commons 1349

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners .. 1350

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 1350

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corportion Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow, and not to sit on Monday next till half-past Twelve o'clock 1350

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1350

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation Bill (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L]—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1350

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow. 1350

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill. Read 3^a, (according to order), and passed 1350

PETITIONS.

Intoxicating Liquors (Hours of Closing) Bill [H.L.].—Petitions in favour of; of the London Auxiliary of the United Kingdom Alliance; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1350

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CERTIFIED INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (SCOTLAND).—General regulations for the management and discipline of certified inebriate reformatories in Scotland 1350

PUBLIC RECORDS.—Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Deputy-Keeper of the Public Records 1351

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Returns of cases of derailment of engines of passenger trains into which inquiries have been held by the inspecting officers of railways during the twenty years ended 31st December, 1904, divided into (1) tank engines, and (2) tender engines, showing in each case the date, place of accident, and railway, and the class of engine.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1351

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF DURHAM).—Order made by the County Council of the county of Durham, altering certain polling districts. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1351

ARUNDEL PORT.—Account and Report for 1904–1905. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1351

THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.—Question, Earl Spencer; Answer, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 1351

Extradition Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING.]–Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 1352

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ᵃ."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ᵃ and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee 1352

Naval and Military Medals Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order).

The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 1352

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 6, after the word 'issued' to insert the words 'by His Majesty;' and in line 7, after the word 'forces' to insert the words 'or any other persons.'"—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 88.)

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (NO. 2) BILL [H.L.] [SECOND READING.] —Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (*Lord Ashbourne*) 1353

Moved, “That the Bill be now read 2^{a}.”—(*Lord Ashbourne.*)

On Question Bill read 2^{a}, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

DISLOYALTY OF IRISH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Lord Oranmore and Browne 1354
The Earl of Arran 1358
Lord Muskerry 1359
The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*) 1359
The Earl of Mayo 1362
Viscount Goschen 1362

THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE.

The Earl of Dartrey 1363
The Marquess of Londonderry 1366

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, to To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 25TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 1367

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CANALS BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 22nd day of this instant May, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have not been complied with, viz. :—Canals Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1367

Wrexham Gas Bill.—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 1367

London and North-Western Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Read the third time, and passed 1367

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1368

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1368

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Milton-next-Sittingbourne, Sittingbourne, and Milton (Rural), and the Enfield and Edmonton Joint Hospital District." presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 228.] .. 1368

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1368

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—Reported without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read a third time To-morrow 1368

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1368

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.—Reported without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 1368

Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [PROVISIONAL Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1368

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Reported without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1368

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments (Provisional Orders confirmed); Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow 1369

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Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments [Scheme confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table .. ..

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday, 5th June 1369

Midland Railway Bill; Caledonian Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1369

Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1369

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1369

Message from the Lords.

That they have agreed to—South Suburban Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill, without Amendment.

South Metropoli an Gas Bill, with an Amendment,

Amendments to, Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the granting of Superannuation Allowances to the Officers and Servants of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Stepney; and for other purposes." [Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to the Tees Valley Water Board, and to confer further borrowing and other powers on the Tees Valley Water Board." [Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to incorporate a board of trustees, and to authorise them to acquire the Workington Harbour and Lonsdale Dock undertaking, in the county of Cumberland; and to construct an extension pier at Workington; and for other purposes." [Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Hythe to construct additional waterworks; to make further provision for the improvement of the borough; and for other purposes." [Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords.] 1369

Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords]; Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [Lords]; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1370

PETITIONS.

Education (Provision of Meals) Bill.—Petitions from Aberdeen, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1370

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Sunday) Bill.—Petition from Northfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1370

Unemployed Workmen Bill.—Petition from Aberdeen, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1370

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITIA (SERVICE OUTSIDE UNITED KINGDOM).—Return [presented 24th May] to be printed. [No. 172.] 1370

INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (SCOTLAND) (REGULATIONS).—Copy presented, of General Regulations for the management and discipline of certified Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1371

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Copy presented, of Returns of Cases of Derailment of Engines of Passenger Trains into which Inquiries have been held by the Inspecting Officers of Railways, during the twenty years ending 31st December, 1904, divided into—I. Tank Engines, and II. Tender Engines, showing in each case the Date, place of Accident, and Railway, and the Class of Engine [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1371

BOROUGHS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (OUTSTANDING LOANS).—Return ordered, giving the names of the Boroughs in England and Wales, the Councils of which, on the 31st day of March, 1905, had Outstanding Loans raised in sums not exceeding £100, otherwise than by the issue of stock, and giving particulars respecting such Loans in the following form:—

	Loans raised in sums not exceeding £100 otherwise than by the issue of stock.																
	Loans secured on mortgage of rates or funds administered by the Council, or of any land, works, or other property belonging to them.						Other Loans raised as above mentioned.					Total amount outstanding on the 31st day of March, 1905.		Amount standing to the credit, on the 31st day of March, 1905, of sinking funds or other funds provided for the repayment of these Outstanding Loans.			
	Minimum amount which the Council—						Minimum amount which the Council—										
Name of Borough.	were prepared to accept.	actually received.	Rate or rates of interest payable.	Period for which borrowed.	Number of persons holding these mortgages.	In what manner and on what security borrowed.	were prepared to accept.	actually received.	Rate or rates of interest payable.	Period for which borrowed or terms on which repayment is to be made of sums borrowed.	Number of persons from whom the Council had received these Loans in sums not exceeding £100.	Loans secured on mortgage.	Other Loans.	Loans secured on mortgage.	Other Loans.	Were the sums borrowed applied to purposes for which the Council had been duly authorised to raise Loans, and, if not, how were they used?	Remarks.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.
	£	£	£ per cent				£	£	£ per cent			£	£	£	£		

—*Sir Gilbert Parker.* 1372

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EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).—Address for "Return of the net Income and Expenditure of British India under certain specific heads for the eleven years from 1893–4 to 1903–4 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 168, of Session 1904)."—(*Sir Henry Fowler*). 1373

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

FALL IN PRICE OF SUGAR—SUGGESTED REDUCTION OF IMPORT DUTY.—Question, Colonel Sadler (Middlesbrough); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain .. 1373

ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF A PRISONER AT THURLES LOCK-UP.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1373

MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS BY LATE STAFF OFFICER OF ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1374

POLLUTION OF THAMES ESTUARY BY SEWAGE DISCHARGE FROM FORTS AND BARRACKS.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1375

POSTMARKS ON LETTERS SHOWING TIME OF POSTING.—Question, Mr. Talbot (Oxford University); Answer, Lord Stanley 1375

DELIVERY OF LETTERS TO CALLERS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Lord Stanley 1376

POSTAL DELIVERIES AT STAVELEY HEAD NEAR KENDAL.—Question, Captain Bagot (Westmoreland, Kendal); Answer, Lord Stanley 1376

POSTAL CHARGES TO CANADA.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Lord Stanley 1377

EMPIRE CABLES AND THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Lord Stanley 1377

CABLE COMMUNICATION—AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH COMPANY.—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, Lord Stanley 1377

WORK OF COLERAINE POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1378

SICK LEAVE IN THE POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Lord Stanley 1379

SANITARY CONDITION OF SCHOOLS AT BARVAS, ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1379

ISOLATION OF LIVERPOOL SMALLPOX HOSPITAL.—Question, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1380

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF INFANTS IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Ernest Gray (West Ham, N.); Answer, Sir William Anson .. 1380

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COST OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AT BOURNEMOUTH, WEST HAM, GRANTHAM, EAST HAM, WIMBLEDON, AND WALTHAMSTOW.—Question, Mr. Ernest Grey; Answer, Sir William Anson 1381

PAY OF DOCKYARD WRITING STAFF.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1381

PORT OF LONDON BILL—POSITION OF DOCK COMPANIES.—Question, Lord Alwyne Compton (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1381

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE—FORESTRY SECTION.—Question, Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 1383

COMPULSORY SHEEP-DIPPING.—Question, Mr. Worsley-Taylor (Lancashire, Blackpool); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 1384

NUMBER OF LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGES AND DRIVERS—HORSE AND MECHANICALLY PROPELLED.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1385

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF CALCUTTA.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1386

CONSTRUCTON OF TELEGRAPH BETWEEN TEHERAN AND INDIAN FRONTIER.—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1386

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS IN INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1387

MRS. GRACE PAKENHAM'S ESTATE, MAHON, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1387

IMPRISONMENT OF CREW OF STEAMER "PATHANIA" at SINGAPORE.—Question, Mr. Robson (South Shields); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1388

REPATRIATION OF CHINESE COOLIES—OTHER PENALTIES.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1388

STRENGTH AND COST OF VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS IN THE FIELD ARMY.—Question, Mr. Seely (Lincoln); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1388

MILITARY HONOURS AT SOLDIERS' FUNERALS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Mr. Arnold-Forster 1389

COLONIAL CONFERENCE, 1906.—Question, Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1389

SCOTCH CHURCH DISPUTE—POSITION OF LORD JOHNSTONE.—Question, MR. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1390

COLONIAL CONFERENCE, 1906.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1390

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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

NAVAL GUNNERY PRACTICE.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1391

ATLANTIC MAIL ROUTES—GALWAY ROUTE.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1391

THE PRICE OF SUGAR.—Questions, Colonel Sadler (Middlesborough) and Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1392

MOTOR-CAR—SPEED REGULATIONS.—Questions, Mr. Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans), Mr. Gibson Bowles, and Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1392

SPOTTED FEVER IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.—Questions, Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe); Answers, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1394

SEWAGE POLLUTION OF THE THAMES ESTUARY.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1395

ELECTRIC MOTOR BROUGHAMS.—Questions, Sir Henry Fowler; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1395

DENBIGHSHIRE EDUCATION DISPUTE.—Questions, Mr. Moss (Denbighshire, E.), Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.), Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs); Answers, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1396

AGRARIAN CRIME IN ENGLAND.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.), Captain Donelan (Cork, E.), and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 1397

AGRARIAN CRIME IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott-Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1398

IRISH NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD RULE 127 (*b*).—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walton Long, Bristol, S.); 1398

BANOGUE SCHOOLS, COUNTY LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1399

ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF A PRISONER AT THURLES LOCK-UP.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1199

MRS. TRANT STANTON'S ESTATE, KINSDALE.—Question, Mr. Crean (Cork, S.E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1400

IRISH AGRARIAN CRIMES RETURNS.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh and Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1401

MONEYMARE DISTURBANCES.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1401

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IRISH AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—VETERINARY BRANCH.—Question, Mr. Joseph Dimsdale (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1402

CARROWKEEL PROCLAIMED MEETING.—Questions, Mr. Charles Devlin, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory), Captain Donelan, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. William Moore (Antrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1403

COALISLAND POLLING STATION.—Question, Mr. Doogan (Tyrone, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1405

AUGHRIM (GALWAY) ARRESTS.—Question, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1405

REED v. COOTE.—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1406

IRELAND—NEW EDUCATION RULES.—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1407

COOLACLARIG EVICTED FARM.—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1407

LORD LISTOWEL'S ESTATE, NORTH KERRY.—Questions, Mr Flavin, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1408

TIRKANE NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1409

PROSECUTION OF MR. SHAWE TENER.—Question, Mr. Roche; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1409

LOUGH CARRIB DRAINAGE BOARD.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1410

IRISH TEACHERS' PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Roche; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1410

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1411

INDIA AND THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland), Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) and Mr. Churchill (Oldham); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1412

THE VOTE OF CENSURE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) Mr. Churchill, Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.), Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1413

POST OFFICE (TELEHONE AGREEMENT)—Ordered, That the Minutes of the Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Telephones, in Session (1895) together with the Report of the said Committee, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Telephones, in Session 1898, together with the Report of the Committee, he referred to the Select Committee on the Post Office (Telephone Agreement).—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*) 1419

Sale of Intoxicants to Children Bill [LORDS].—Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1420

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SUPPLY [8TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6.—CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £13,950, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary in Dublin and London, and of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums."

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1420

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chief Secretary."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Mr. William Moore (*Antrim, N.*) 1436
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 1449
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1459
Mr. Haviland Burke (*King's County, Tullamore*) 1463
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 1469
Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 1470
Mr. Sloan (*Belfast, S.*) 1473

And it being half past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means from the remainder of this day's Sittings.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, the Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [8TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6.—CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £13,950, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending

on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary in Dublin and London, and of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums."

Mr. Sloan 1476
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 1477
Mr. Gordon (*Londonderry, N.*) 1482
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 1485

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chief Secretary."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 1497

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 98 Noes, 145. (Division List No. 181.)

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

Closing of Licensed Premises (St. Patrick's Day) Ireland Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1511

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolution reported from the Select Committee.

"That, in the case of the Canals Bill, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

Report to lie upon the Table 1512

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 26TH MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) [H.L.] ; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that no further Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1).

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Highland Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1513

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SOUTH BARRACAS (BUENOS AYRES) GAS AND COKE COMPANY.—Petition of the Company praying leave to introduce a Bill "For increasing the capital of the South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company by the Creation of paid-up shares, and providing for the issue thereof to the shareholders; and for other purposes," together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 1513

Corbett Estate Bill [H.L.].—Committed 1513

Bristol Corporation Bill.—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on May 18th, and Friday last discharged, and Bill committed 1513

Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill.—Read 2a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection .. 1513

University College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1514

Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill. Read 3a, and passed 1514

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Brought from the Commons 1514

London and North-Western Railway Bill; Rhondda Urban District Council Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1a; and referred to the Examiners 1514

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 1514

Wrexham Gas Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to 1514

Croydon Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1514

Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1514

Accrington Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments 1514

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments .. 1514

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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (No. 89); Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill (No. 90); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (No. 91); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (No. 92); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (No. 93); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill (No. 94).—Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners 1515

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next .. 1515

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next .. 1515

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a (according to order) 1515

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1515

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.—Petition for early closing of; of Tooting Graveney Branch of Women's Total Abstinence Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1515

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3381. France (Bordeaux);

No. 3382. Turkey (Bussorah). 1515

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT ACT, 1903.—Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of all his proceedings under the Act, for the financial year ended 31st March, 1905 1515

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners:—

I. Modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of light railways in:—

(Portsmouth and Hayling Light Railway Order, 1905). The borough of Portsmouth, and in the rural district of Havant, in the county of Southampton, including a conveyor bridge over the Langstone Channel.

(Campbeltown and Macrihanish Light Railway Order, 1905). The county of Argyll, from Campbeltown to Macrihanish.

(Guildford Light Railways Order, 1905.) The parish of Stoke-next-Guildford, in the rural district of Guildford and in the borough of Guildford, in the county of Surrey.

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II. Confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending :—

(Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Further Borrowing Powers) Order, 1905.) The Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Amendment) Order, 1901 ; and for other purposes.

(Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway (Speed Amendment) Order, 1905.) The Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway Order, 1897, as to speed 1516

MINES AND QUARRIES (GENERAL REPORT AND STATISTICS FOR 1904 : PART I. DISTRICT STATISTICS).

Statistics of the persons employed, output, and accidents at mines and quarries in the United Kingdom, arranged according to the inspection districts.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1516

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS.—Twenty-second Report of the Comptroller-General of patents, designs, and trade marks, with appendices, for the year 1905 1516

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS REGULATION ACTS, 1881 AND 1892.

Forty-first annual Report on alkali, etc., works by the chief inspector. Proceedings during the year 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1517

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].

The following Lords were named of the Select Committee :—

L. Zouche.
L. Digby.
L. Kenyon.
L. Stanley of Alderley.
L. Hylton.
L. Burghclere.
L. Allerton.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

TIMBER DECK-LOADS.

Lord Muskerry 1517
Lord Avebury 1520
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 1521

House adjourned at five minutes past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 26TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of MR. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time upon Monday next .. 1525

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 1525

Clyde Navigation Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1525

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill; Liverpool Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed 1525

Skegness Water Bill.—As amended, considered; a clause added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1525

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1526

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 1526

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1526

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).—Ordered, That Mr. Robert Bruce do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills on Monday next, at Twelve of the clock 1526

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1526

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Railway Bills (Group 4).—Mr. de Tatton Egerton reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That a communication had been received from Mr. Arkwright, one of the members of the said Committee, that he was unable, on account of domestic anxiety, to attend the Committee this day. Report to lie upon the Table 1526

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to—Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill, without Amendment.

Seaham Gas Bill; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to, Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the Councils of the County Boroughs of Liverpool and Manchester, the County of Surrey, and the Urban District of Willesden, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts." [Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Nottingham to construct additional tramways; to make certain street improvements and waterworks; and for other purposes." [Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for transferring University College, London, to the University of London, and for other matters connected therewith; and for amending the University of London Act, 1898." [University College, London (Transfer) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Urban District Council for the Urban District of Whitby, in the North Riding of the county of York, to acquire the undertaking of the Whitby Harbour Trustees and the market rights within the district as well as certain lands; to make further provisions for the improvement and good government of the district; and for other purposes. [Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Mansfield with respect to their water undertaking; to make further and better provision in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other purposes." [Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer powers on the Urban District Council of Bangor, in the county of Down, for the construction of new waterworks; for the extension of their gas undertaking; for the regulation and control of the seashore and adjoining lands; and for the improvement and local government of their district; and for other purposes." [Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to rearrange the capital and amend the borrowing powers of the Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Company; and for other purposes." [Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords] 1527

Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; University College, London (Transfer Bill [Lords]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords]: Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [Lords]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1528

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 229] 1528

PETITIONS.

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL. Petition from Haddington, against; to lie upon the Table 1528

DOGS BILL.—Petition from Haddington, against; to lie upon the Table .. 1528

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Haddington, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1529

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Haddington, against; to lie upon the Table 1529

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).—Petition from St. Frideswide's, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 1529

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Haddington, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1529

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Lewisham; and Weston-super-Mare; to lie upon the Table 1529

STREET BETTING BILL.—Petitions in favour; from the City of London; Haddington; and Kentish Town; to lie upon the Table 1529

TEINDS AND FIARS PRICES (SCOTLAND).—Petition from Haddington, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 1529

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.—Petition from the West Riding of Yorkshire, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1529

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS REGULATION ACTS, 1881 AND 1892.—Copy presented, of Forty-first Annual Report on Alkali, etc., Works by the Chief Inspector, being for 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 173.] 1529

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1903.—Copy presented, of Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland of all his proceedings under the Act, for the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1529

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MINES AND QUARRIES.—Copy presented, of General Report, and Statistics for the year 1904, Part 1. (District Statistics) Statistics of the Persons employed, Output, and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the United Kingdom, arranged according to the Inspection districts [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1530

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway Order, 1897, as to speed (Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway (Speed Amendment) Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1530

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the borough of Portsmouth and in the rural district of Havant, in the county of Southampton, including a conveyor Bridge over the Langstone Channel (Portsmouth and Hayling Light Railway Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1530

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the parish of Stoke-next-Guildford, in the rural district of Guildford and in the borough of Guildford, in the county of Surrey (Guildford Light Railways Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1530

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Argyll from Campbeltown to Machrihanish (Campbeltown and Machrihanish Light Railway Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1530

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Amendment) Order, 1901, and for other purposes (Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Further Borrowing Powers) Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1531

SUGAR (COST) (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered March 9th; *Mr. Gibson Bowles*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 174.] 1531

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS.—Copy presented, of Twenty-second Report of the Comptroller-General of Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks, with Appendices, for the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 175.] 1531

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3381 and 3382 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1531

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT CLERKS (ABSTRACTOR CLASS).—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1531

Sick Leave in the Post Office—Case of Mr. Bullamore.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Lord Stanley 1532

Afghanistan.—Question, Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1533

Escape of Convict Sheehan from Dundrum Lunatic Asylum.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1533

Waveney School, Ballymena.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr Walter Long 1535

Guy's and Waveney Schools, Ballymena.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr Walter Long 1535

Canals Bill. [Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker called the attention of the House to the fact that one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills had reported that the Standing Orders applicable to the Bill had not been complied with, and that the Select Committee on Standing Orders had reported that the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with.

Whereupon the Order was discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Sunday) Bill. [Second Reading].—Orde for the Second Reading read.

Mr. Perks (Lincolnshire, Louth) 1337
Mr. Cameron Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston) 1540

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 1542
Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.) 1544

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir J. Ferguson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. George White (Norfolk, N.W.) 1545
Mr. Hugh Smith (Northumberland, Tyneside) 1548
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 1549
Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross) 1557
Mr. Sharpe (Kensington, N.) 1556
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) 1557
Sir William Tomlinson (Preston) 1557
Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping) 1558
Sir Ernest Flower (Bradford, W.) 1559
Mr. Groves (Salford, S.) 1561
Mr. Whittaker (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) 1565
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 1571

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Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 108 ; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 182

Words added. Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill. [Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 1573

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir William Tomlinson (*Preston*) 1581
Sir Francis Powell (*Wigan*).. 1584

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Trades Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—Order for consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee), read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1586

Public Accounts Committee.—First Report brought up, and read. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 176.] 1586

Whereupon Mr. Deputy-Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION

IN THE

SIXTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

SIXTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 11*th May*, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law). The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company—(Petition for Bill). Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next.

Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend on the Second Reading of the Bill, and to produce a document.

Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 13th and 31st of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 30th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

Accrington Corporation Bill. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

London and India Docks Company Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The order of the 14th of April last discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Brentwood Gas Bill; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed.

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill. Read 2ª, and committed for Thursday next.

London Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Otley Improvement Bill. Read 2ª, and committed for Thursday next.

Great Northern Railway Bill. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill; Seaham Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed for Thursday next.

Croydon Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed.

Hitchin and District Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House, together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the case. Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned.

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Morley Corporation Bill; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.):

V. Ridley,
L. Belhaven and Stenton,
L. Ravensworth,
L. Brougham and Vaux (chairman),
L. Biddulph;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order).

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petition for early closing of; of Lewisham Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour of; of Middlesbrough Corporation; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RAILWAY RETURNS.

Return relating to the railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1904. Preliminary statement.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3367, Greece (Cyclades); No. 3368, France (Havre); No. 3369, Greece (Morea, Aetolia, and Acarnania); No. 3370, Greece (Piræus).

ARMY.

Return of stores and supplies despatched to South Africa during the period 1899–1901 destroyed locally. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

TRAMWAYS ACT, 1870.

Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consent of the County Council of Glamorgan to the Aberavon Tramways Provisional Order.

INDIA.

Home accounts. Home accounts of the Government of India.

Estimate. Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India, for the year 1904–1905, compared with the results of 1903–1904.

Finance and Revenue Accounts. Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India, for the year 1903–1904.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPORT UNDER WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT, 1889).

Report of the Board of Education on the administration of schools under the Act.

SOMALILAND PROTECTORATE.

Treasury Minute, dated 13th April, 1905, as to audit of the accounts of the Somaliland Protectorate.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Account showing receipts and expenditure on account of proceedings under the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, during the year ended 31st March, 1905.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).

Accounts showing the receipts and expenditure on account of bankruptcy proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1905.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minutes. Dated 12th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to Matthew Henry Danily, postmaster at Malpas. Dated 10th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to John Bolton late of the Engineer-in-Chief's Department, General Post Office. Dated 4th May, declaring Yunnaufu and Tengyueh to be unhealthy places within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on the 20th January, 1905, amending Statutes III. and XVI. of the Statutes of the College. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 71.)

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, this Bill is introduced to remedy a clear defect in the law as it at present stands. Some years ago the law officers decided that county councils were only enabled by Act of Parliament once for all to settle polling districts. This decision put them to great inconvenience, because, owing to changes of a local character, it is frequently necessary to alter the arrangement of polling districts. This Bill enables them to do so. The present state of the law is extremely anomalous, inasmuch as polling districts can be altered from time to time for Parliamentary elections but not for county council elections. This Bill, I believe in the identical form in which it is now before your Lordships, has passed this House no less than three times. Last year it was introduced by my noble friend Lord Ribblesdale, whose illness we all deplore; and, as it is a non-contentious measure and agreed to by the Government, I hope your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

On Question, Bill read 2a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, this is a Bill that proposes to transfer in certain cases some of the powers that have been hitherto exercised by justices of the peace in petty sessions, and sometimes in quarter sessions, with regard to the arrangement of polling districts in Parliamentary boroughs to the county council in boroughs where the town council is not the local authority. The reason why your Lordships are asked to give your assent to this alteration is this, that at present county councils have complete jurisdiction over the polling arrangements with regard to county council elections, and it seems extremely desirable that one authority should be supreme in this matter. This Bill, like the last one, has passed your Lordships' House on three occasions, but has failed to get through the other House. It is assented to by the Government, and I hope your Lordships will again read it a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

On Question, Bill read 2a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

Lord Monkswell.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, the object of this Bill is sufficiently indicated in the title; it is to close public-houses on Christmas Day in Ireland. Noble Lords may be surprised at my introducing an Irish Bill, but having been requested to do so by the Irish Members who have carried the Bill though the House of Commons I thought I ought not to refuse. The Bill is supported by the Irish Members generally, by Home Rulers and Unionists, by those from all parts of Ireland, by both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Archbishops, and by the Grocers and Vintners Protection Association as representing the trade. It may be said that the number of publicans who open is few. That is true; but it is felt an injustice that a few should open while the majority close. Moreover, the number tends to increase. The Bill is generally approved in Ireland; there is no opposition in the House of Commons, and I hope it will commend itself to your Lordships. I move the Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I must say that it strikes me, without something more being said on the subject than has been said by the noble Lord, as a very strong order indeed for Parliament to be asked to enact that no intoxicating liquor of any kind shall be sold in Ireland during the whole of Christmas Day. I hesitate to assent to it.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I understood the noble Lord who moved the Second Reading to say that the Bill was approved generally in Ireland, and also by the Irish Members of all sections in the other House of Parliament. I confess it does seem to me rather singular that a measure coming to us upon such authority as that should be summarily rejected in the manner proposed by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. The present Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland commenced his Viceroyalty by stating that he desired that Ireland should be governed in accordance with Irish ideas. This appears to be an Irish idea, a measure desired generally in Ireland. If it can be shown that there are Irish objections to it, and that the noble Lord is mistaken in the view he takes on the matter, well and good. But your Lordships would, I think, make a mistake if you were to refuse to consider and summarily reject what I understood to be an Irish idea.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, my noble friend beside me who represents the Irish Office (the Earl of Denbigh), tells me that his attention had not been called to this Bill, and he is therefore not prepared to state how it is regarded by the responsible Department. In these circumstances, as the Bill deals with a question of some importance, I would venture to suggest that the discussion of it might be adjourned until another day.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, this Bill could only have passed through the House of Commons with the assent of His Majesty's Government. If the members of the Government who sit in the other House had taken exception to the Bill it could never have arrived here; and for my part, I am prepared on this occasion to support the members of the Government in the House of Commons rather than those who sit in this House. In the circumstances, I hope your Lordships will give a Second Reading to the Bill.

LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I feel I cannot resist the suggestion that has been thrown out by the noble Marquess the Leader of your Lordships' House that the discussion should be adjourned; but I should like most emphatically to repeat that the Bill was supported in the House of Commons by the Irish Members generally, by Home Rulers and Unionists, and by those from all parts of Ireland. There was absolutely no opposition to it in the House of Commons. It was accepted by His Majesty's Government, and I had therefore hoped that they would give the Bill a favourable reception in this House. After the noble Marquess's appeal I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Moved, "That the debate stand adjourned until this day week."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned accordingly to Thursday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD HYLTON: My Lords, in asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill, I hope I shall not be accused of arrogance in asserting that it deals with matters of an important character. My only regret is that the Bill is not in the hands of some Member of this House who could urge its merits with force and authority. Those who are in favour of the Bill have waited for some time to see if the Local Government Board could not be induced to introduce a measure dealing with these matters, and it is only finding themselves disappointed in that quarter that they have resolved to try what they can do with a private measure. I need hardly state that this Bill is of an entirely non-political character, and I hope that it may receive support from noble Lords on both sides of the House, many of whom are intimately acquainted with all the requirements and problems of local self-government, and some of whom, I think, will confess that there are certain blots in our present system, one of which—possibly not the least grave—this Bill aims at remedying.

I should like to say that the Bill is framed in no spirit of hostility whatever to district councils, nor to the enforcement of any by-laws considered necessary for proper sanitation—if you look at the Bill you will see that no by-laws relating to sanitation or water-supply are touched by the Bill—they will remain just as they are at present. I will return to that point later, but I wish to make it perfectly clear at the first. I should also like to remove any latent suspicion there may be in the minds of any of your Lordships that the introduction of this Bill has been prompted or instigated in any way by circumstances connected with the case in which a certain learned Judge was some time ago defendant. That is not so. Dissatisfaction with these matters has been rife for some time past; dissatisfaction with building by-laws has been increasing, and I can assure your Lordships that this Bill had been printed and privately circulated among its supporters before the case of Mr. Justice Grantham had come before the public.

I suppose there can scarcely be two opinions as to the vital necessity to this country, and to the working classes in this country, of an adequate provision of good, well-built, sanitary, and inexpensive dwellings. The proper housing of the working classes, all persons who are experienced in these matters will agree, is the foundation stone upon which any measures must subsequently be imposed leading in any way to their material or moral improvement. It is a truism to say that good houses mean good tenants, and that most of the evils which philanthropists deplore arise, either directly or indirectly, from the working classes being crowded into insanitary houses, not up to the requirements of the present day. Other deplorable results arise in the country from this overcrowding. Young men, when they grow up, go away from the country to the already overcrowded cities; labour becomes scarce; agriculture and other rural trades suffer. It was stated in the very interesting Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration that young men left the country because they could not get cottages, and that if a young man wanted to get married he was often obliged to leave because he could not get a home.

In these circumstances one would have supposed that both the Legislature and the Executive Government would have done all in their power to promote the provision of a good supply of cottages. I do not forget—and your Lordships need not be reminded—that Housing Acts were passed in the years 1890 and 1900 under which district councils were enabled to buy land, to build cottages, to lease land for the building of cottages, and so on; but these Acts were permissive, and I believe that only two district councils out of something like 700 have taken advantage of them. Therefore, very little good has been done by that legislation. But this Bill does not aim at providing more cottage accommodation by municipal means; it rather seeks to encourage private enterprise, which, in my opinion, is far and away the best means of providing this accommodation. If the cottages are provided by municipal enterprise they have to be let at rents which, I believe, in ninety-nine instances out of 100, working men are unable to pay; and the general effect is to put up the rents all round the district. I do not look for that solution of the difficulty. I feel that it is by encouraging private enterprise, and by taking off the restrictions which private enterprise now feels itself shackled with, that we may arrive at a satisfactory solution.

Your Lordships will naturally ask, when you see a Bill dealing with building by-laws, how do the by-laws at the present moment affect building? To answer that question it is necessary to glance at the history of these by-laws. The history is not at all a long one, and I will endeavour, in the shortest way possible, to outline it. Your Lordships will remember that about thirty years ago Lord Beaconsfield uttered one of his oracular sentences, *Sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*, and a Public Health Bill was introduced into Parliament. It was a measure of great length. Whether *post hoc* or *propter hoc*, I do not know, but it passed through Parliament with very little discussion; and reference to *Hansard* will show that in another place the clauses relating to new buildings were not even discussed. In this House the Duke of Somerset of that day, who I have always understood was a very sagacious man, did express his fear that some of the clauses would prove to be of a very harassing nature, and he pointed out, what I am afraid has proved to be the case, that some of the inspectors and surveyors who were to be appointed under the provisions of the Bill might be "very ignorant persons." But the late Lord Salisbury having retorted that "inspectors were the logical outcome of democratic government," the Bill passed. Out of its 333 clauses only two related to new buildings, but by those clauses the rural and urban sanitary authorities that were created by the Act were empowered to pass by-laws to regulate all future buildings; and then, by the Local Government Act, 1894, the rural and urban district councils, the heirs and successors of the rural and urban sanitary authorities, inherited the powers of their predecessors.

At the present day, out of some 700 district councils, 434, I believe, have had codes of building by-laws sanctioned. I contend that in many instances those codes make building, dear enough already, dearer still, and in certain cases they altogether put a check upon it. These by-laws are of a very heterogeneous character—they are not even the same in adjacent districts; but in most cases the only material that is allowed for the structure is brick or stone. In nearly all cases comparatively elaborate plans and sections of each floor of an intended new building have to be submitted to the district council. Not only that, but plans of the adjoining property, which may not happen to belong to the same owner, have to be deposited, as well as the level of the street in certain rural districts. If you wish to put up a cottage half a mile away from any other building —say in the centre of a wood—the building by-laws direct and insist that you shall give the level of the "street" facing the cottage, and even poultry-houses or summer-houses are only exempt under certain conditions. Then there are, in my humble opinion, totally unnecessary regulations in many of the building by-laws as to the exact mathematical relation of the window space to the floor space, and much extra expense is caused thereby.

In his last annual report Dr. Pierie, the medical officer of health of the Guildford Rural District, pointed out, by a careful calculation, that the average cost of an average brick cottage in districts where they had by-laws was such that a higher rent of sixpence per week had to be charged for such cottage as compared with a similar type of cottage erected in non by-law districts. Now, sixpence a week to many persons may seem a very small sum, but 26s. a year is by no means a matter of indifference to a labouring man in the country. Some of these points connected with building by-laws are of so curious a nature that I think the late Mr. Hanbury, when he was Minister for Agriculture, was fully justified in stating, as he did at a public meeting, that he found the by-laws in many of the rural districts were of an "absurd" character. The responsibility for the imposition of these by-laws must rest, primarily I am afraid, with the Local Government Board. The work of the Local Government Board, no doubt, is heavy, and its officers, I dare say, are overtaxed; but I am afraid that in regard to the original building by-laws that were sanctioned by them for country districts they must have left the direction of the matter to some gentleman in the office who could have been very little acquainted with the requirements of rural life and probably had rarely travelled beyond the four mile cab radius.

On this point I should like to quote an extract from a letter addressed to me on November 7th, 1902, by Mr. Long, when President of the Local Government Board. My right hon. friend was kind enough to give me permission to quote the words in his letter. Mr. Long wrote thus—

> "Until recently there was only one model form of by-laws, designed originally for towns, and it is no doubt the case that there are instances where a series based on this model is in force in a rural district."

Can a stronger case be made out for reform than that stated by my right hon. friend? To Mr. Long, however, I most gladly give my humble praise—and I am sure your Lordships will award praise also—for having, when he was at the Local Government Board in May, 1903, brought out a new model code of building by-laws for rural districts which is a vast improvement on those hitherto in force. But the mischief had been already done, because where building by-laws had been sanctioned in rural districts previous to that time neither the Local Government Board nor anybody else could force them to adopt a new code. A new code of building by-laws can only be adopted or sanctioned if the district council itself applies to the Local Government Board for permission to do so, and that is very seldom done.

Having endeavoured to state what is the history of the present building by-laws, I will now give your Lordships a few instances of what has been their practical effect, and what is the view taken by the public in regard to this matter. On April 2nd last an important conference was held at Guildford under the auspices of the National Housing Reform Council, and the chairman made use of these words—

> "They were also pressing for something to be done in respect to the by-laws. What was required was a new set of by-laws which would give greater freedom of choice in regard to building materials, and especially to secure the provision with each cottage of a greater amount of light and air space, gardens, etc."

and then he added—

> "He had stumped the country denouncing the present by-laws."

Lord Rosebery wrote a sympathetic letter to the chairman saying—

> "He was convinced there was no more important subject in the range of our social politics."

On January 16th this year, a meeting was held at the Surveyors' Institute, London, attended by many of the most eminent architects and surveyors of the day. A discussion took place, and was adjourned to two subsequent meetings, in which these gentlemen brought forward case after case of hardship which they had experienced in the course of their professional work in consequence of building by-laws. A few days afterwards —on January 21st—a letter appeared in *The Times* from Mr. Macdona, a Member of the other House of Parliament. He related how it had been his intention to import from France and rebuild in Lancashire or Cheshire a number of artistic villas, into the composition of which wood partly entered, and which he had bought from the last Exhibition in Paris. At the last moment he found he was precluded by the building by-laws from putting up any new buildings into the composition of which wood entered. and this within a few miles of the famous old timbered halls in Cheshire and in Lancashire!

Another case which created notoriety at the time and was alluded to in the public Press was that in which a large landowner in Sussex put up some bungalow cottages, one storey high, for some of the people employed on his estate. But as he used iron in the construction of the cottages—he said it was his intention subsequently to paint the iron—the district council sent their workpeople and actually demolished them, and the gentleman in question sent photographs to the illustrated papers of his poor demolished cottages. There was no fault found with the accommodation provided for the workpeople, nor with the sanitation or the water-supply, but they were demolished merely because the hide-bound building by-laws only allowed brick and stone to be used.

Then there is the case to which I referred just now, in which Mr. Justice Grantham figured. I will not enter into the merits of this case, but will point out to your Lordships what the public think of it. I believe that in every assize town that the learned Judge visited after his case had been heard he was presented with addresses from the grand juries congratulating him on the stand he had taken; and the grand jury at Cambridge Assizes thanked him for—

> "The determination with which you have brought before the country the many and great obstacles thrown in the way of cottage-building in country districts by unpracticable and unnecessary by-laws, and by the arbitrary way in which they are sometimes administered by those in authority."

There was also a case in which the noble and gallant ex-Commander-in-Chief, Earl Roberts, put up a gardener's cottage in the grounds of his country residence near Ascot. One of the new patent materials was used in the erection of the cottage, and the moment it was finished the Rural District Council of Windsor ordered the noble Earl's prosecution because the structure did not exactly conform to the by-laws in the matter of material. That was the only complaint, I believe, that they had against it. The noble Earl, determined not to be beaten, entered into communication with the Local Government Board on the subject. The Local Government Board sent down a special inspector, some words passed between that gentleman and the Windsor District Council, and the noble Earl heard no more of the prosecution, and the cottage has been inhabited, I believe, ever since.

The point I should like to urge upon your Lordships in this matter is this, that where a person in the position of Lord Roberts may successfully fight a rural district council, persons in a humbler position often give the matter up, or think the game not worth the candle; and I believe that in consequence a great number of cottages are not built in this country. I have other instances of the ridiculous nature of these by-laws, but I do not think I need go on with the list. I cannot, however, refrain from mentioning this. A landowner erected some very nice cottages of an extra ornamental character in a picturesque village on the Thames in order to harmonise with the surroundings. The district council, after the cottages had been finished, compelled him to remove the casement windows and substitute ordinary sash windows because the amount of light which the casement windows admitted per square inch was not conformable to the by-laws. Again, a friend of mine told me that a gentleman in Essex had built a new lodge for his house with a thatched roof, and that the local district council compelled him to remove the roof, although the lodge stood entirely by itself, and I suppose he had to put on hideous blue slates in its place. Under the present by-laws neither Westminster Hall nor the Tower of London could have been built.

The most striking proof of the absurdity of many of the present by-laws is this, that scores of district councils are continually winking at infractions of their own by-laws. In face of the grievances I have described, what is the attitude that district councils take up in reference to these matters? They take up one of two attitudes. The first attitude is that they wink at infractions of their own by-laws. That, I may mention, is strictly an illegal thing to do, for it has been laid down by a decision in the King's Bench that any ratepayer may enforce a district council to carry out their own by-laws. In regard to this matter, let me quote what Mr. Elwes, a well-known architect, said at the surveyors' meeting to which I have already referred—

> "His experience of rural district councils had been that 'approached in the right way' they would not object to reasonable infringements of their building by-laws."

I think that to give district councils a dispensing power of that kind can only lead to jobbery, corruption, and favouritism. It enables them, when their friend Mr. Brown comes with some plan infringing the by-laws, to let him infringe them; but when Mr. Green, who may be somebody they have a grudge against, comes with a plan, they will not let him infringe them. I do not think your Lordships will consider that that dispensing power is a right power for district councils to possess.

That is one attitude they take up. Then there is another attitude which, if I may use a simile I heard the other day in a Committee-room of your Lordships' House, I will call the "pious Mussulman attitude." Here a district council sits down in silent adoration of its by-laws as of the Koran, and if anyone suggests a modification they say, "No, you cannot have this; it is not in the 'Book of Life.'" That is a very unfortunate attitude, but it is not an illegal attitude like the other one I have described, and when I say it is an unfortunate attitude I do not mean that it is unfortunate for landowners in the district, for landowners do not build cottages either for profit or for fun; it is an unfortunate attitude for the working-men, the potential occupiers of the cottages, who must remain in their already overcrowded dwellings.

Certain suggestions have been made for reforms in this matter. One suggestion is that districts should be divided into populous and non-populous areas, and that in the populous areas by-laws of the urban type should obtain, and that in non-populous areas the by-laws should be those of a rural type. That is the policy which I think at the present moment the Local Government Board is urging on district councils. If it were possible to carry that out I do not say it might not be an advantageous idea; but I think it impossible to carry out for this reason, that district councils themselves most strongly object to anything which will divide up the unity of their administration. I know a case where this suggestion was made by the Local Government Board to a large rural district council, and the council unanimously refused to consider it. A second suggestion for reform that has been made is that appeal shall be possible from the decision of the district council in regard to by-laws, either to the county council or the local bench of magistrates. Like many of your Lordships, I am a member of a county council, and I think the tendency is for county councils to become rather overworked. There is the work of the sub-committees, and we have lately had practically the whole of elementary education put upon our shoulders, and in the future secondary education, too, will be placed on county councils. I do not think it would be an advantageous thing to put extra work on those bodies. As regards an appeal to the local bench I cannot, of course pretend that local benches are overworked, but I do not think that at this time of day the idea of an appeal from an elected body like a district council to a nominated body like a local bench of magistrates would be popular with the public.

There is a third course open, namely, for district councils themselves to apply to the Local Government Board to be allowed, where they have antiquated by-laws, to adopt the new model series. The difficulty there is this. District councils are not very fond of entering into negotiations, if they can help it, with the Local Government Board. It was pointed out to me that in the case of one district council the negotiations extended over two years before the Local Government Board sanctioned their original building by-laws, and they refused to put the whole business into the melting-pot, and to throw the district into confusion in the matter of building, waiting perhaps another two years before the decision of the Local Government Board is given.

Rejecting this course, therefore, this Bill attempts to be general in its application and simple in its provisions. By Clause 2 we propose to exempt new buildings from by-laws in cases where sufficient space is provided round the building. This is a principle that has been recognised by the London Building Act, 1894. We only propose to extend it to the country. We think that the curtilage mentioned in the Bill will lead in nearly every instance to the provision of gardens. We think that the least expensive materials which ingenuity may suggest, and which are being experimented with at the present moment, will lead to cheaper cottages being built, and, as regards danger from fire, I have never heard of a case in which the windows of cottages are more than 12 feet from the ground. Many people will say, "I do not like a Bill of this kind; it will give encouragement to the jerry-builder." But I do not think the Bill will give encouragement to the jerry-builders. In my experience, the jerry-builder is in the habit of buying a plot of land and then cramming as many cottages in a row as he can squeeze on it, with little garden, if any at all; and this Bill will only give the benefits—if benefits there be—to those who build detached houses with sufficient space and area round them.

I admit, of course, that the Bill gives a measure of liberty. If your Lordships think that the liberty may degenerate into licence you will reject the Bill; but I hope, on the contrary, you will recognise the principle that the building trade, like any other trade, can only develop if restrictions are taken off it. It is impossible, of course, for me to predict that if the Bill passes a large number of new cottages will be erected to-morrow; but it will remove shackles and fetters which I venture to say are unnecessary, absurd, and ridiculous. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a"—(*Lord Hylton.*)

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH: My Lords, I hope the House will give this Bill a Second Reading. It is very difficult for anyone to add to the arguments which have been so ably laid before the House by my noble friend in moving the Second Reading. There can be no doubt that the by-laws in question do put very serious difficulties in the way of housing labourers and those who work upon the land. It is the desire of all of us to bring people back to the land, and if sufficient labour is to be had to cultivate the land the labourers must be properly housed. Figures are often fallacious, and I do not propose to trouble the House with elaborate calculations; but I shall not be very short of the truth if I say that, generally speaking, it is difficult for any landowner, whoever he may be, to build what is called a double tenement cottage for less than a sum of £400. That varies, of course, according to locality, and anything at all ornate would be very much more. Possibly in some favoured districts the sum might be somewhat less.

If the cottages are to be inhabited by poor people you can only let them at small rents, and it would be impossible to charge a sum equivalent to 3 per cent. on the outlay. In addition to this, no sooner are the new cottages built than the rating authority proceeds to assess them, and the owner has to pay heavy rates in respect of them. This is just one of those cases which show up the great fallacy of the argument that rates are paid in rent, and that if rates increase the man who actually has to pay them can always recoup himself by increasing the rents, because in cases like this it is impossible to do so. It may be said that these things should not be looked at from a monetary point of view. That is all very well, and no doubt many people, if they can afford to do so, will take that liberal view; but I would point out that in many cases landowners are not a rich set of men. Here and there you may find very rich men, but most of them are poor. If a man is merely going to build one double cottage he may be able to pursue this excellent plan, but if he is obliged to build eight or ten cottages it becomes a serious matter into which the commercial element must enter; and if the natural hardship of the situation is enhanced by building by-laws which add to the cost of material and construction, the difficulty of the unfortunate landowner who wishes to do well by his estate and to benefit his neighbour is increased until the last stage is worse than the first.

My noble friend does not seek in any way to encourage the building of insanitary houses or cottages, or in any way to permit what is commonly called "jerry-building." I think that so far as building by-laws provide for adequate sanitary accommodation, proper water-supply, and so forth, they are always to be commended; but there is no doubt they very often go too far and are unnecessary. In many cases they have been brought into being for no very particular purpose. It sometimes happens that a district council will decide that a measure ought to be put in force on no other ground than that a neighbouring council, probably from other reasons, has put it into force. These by-laws very often have a deleterious effect which is not intended, and are passed without very much thought. This is a rather difficult subject, and I do not wish to labour the point. The Bill deals with a good many details of a somewhat technical nature, but it is hoped that it will have the effect of relaxing the severe restrictions which often act to the detriment of a good cause It is just possible that certain Amendments may be desirable in Committee, or that some further inquiry may be necessary; but I hope that sufficient has been said to induce your Lordships to give this well-meant measure a Second Reading.

*LORD WOLVERTON: My Lords, in the absence of my noble friend Lord Kenyon, who is performing his military duties, I have been asked to draw attention to one or two clauses of the Bill, to give it, on behalf of my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, a sympathetic reception, and to assent to the Second Reading on the understanding that it should be referred to a Select Committee of your Lordships' House, whose discussions will be of the greatest advantage in the later stages of the Bill. With regard to Clause 2, the object of which is to exempt buildings sufficiently isolated from the operation of existing and future building by-laws, the Local Government Board are entirely in sympathy with the idea of encouraging builders to erect detached houses by relaxing some of the by-laws which now stand in their way. I also attach the greatest importance to Clause 4, the object of which is to render exempted buildings subject to by-laws relating to sanitation. This Bill will in no way alter the by-laws now in existence with regard to sanitation. Clause 5, especially, raises a most important point—namely, whether five ratepayers shall have the power to appeal to the Local Government Board to override the decisions of a duly-elected body. That is a clause which the Local Government Board will have to take into their careful consideration, and it is one which, I think, must meet with ample discussion in the Select Committee. I understand that the noble Marquess is quite prepared to grant a Select Committee, and that he will facilitate its formation.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I do not wish to introduce any rift into the harmony which seems to pervade the House with regard to this Bill. We all, I am sure, agree that it is very desirable that facilities should be given for the building of good and cheap cottages in rural districts, but it does not follow that we are prepared in any way to revolutionise the law or exempt any class of the community from the liability to obey it. It certainly does seem to me that there are points in the Bill which go rather far. If you boil down Clause 2, what does it come to? It comes to this, that in rural districts, in the case of isolated buildings, or buildings of which there are more than two together, the by-laws with regard to the Building Acts and Public Health Acts—always saving the very important Clause 4—are repealed altogether, and the builders of cottages under such circumstances are to be exempt from any of the conditions which apply elsewhere. I think the noble Lord who made such an excellent and interesting speech in moving the Second Reading of this Bill rather saw the difficulty of that particular point himself, because he told us very frankly that, as far as he could understand, the idea of the Local Government Board was, rather than to follow the methods of his Bill, to adopt a method by which different regulations should be in force for rural districts from those in force for urban districts. I think there is a great deal to be said for that. It is clear that in urban districts very different regulations are necessary, and that much stricter precautions must be taken from a sanitary point of view and also from the point of view of fire and so forth. Therefore I quite admit that different regulations for rural buildings should be encouraged.

Your Lordships will see, if you examine it, that Clause 2 of this Bill really means the repeal of existing regulations under the Public Health Acts, saving what is in Clause 4, so far as isolated buildings are concerned. I think that that is a matter which requires to be carefully considered, and it is one which I hope the Committee to which the Bill is to be referred will go into very closely indeed. I quite agree with Lord Wolverton's criticisms with regard to Clause 5. That clause seems to me a very strong order indeed. This is the position. A particular local authority, after consultation with, and acting largely on the advice of, the Local Government Board, prepares a set of by-laws, and then, if a certain number of people in that particular district are dissatisfied with the operation of those by-laws, the Local Government Board are to be empowered, on the motion of five inhabitants, to step in and upset the by-laws passed by an elected representative body, and altogether to nullify them.

LORD HYLTON: Only to substitute better ones.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Quite so, and that makes the matter worse. Not only are the Local Government Board empowered to put aside the regulations made by the elected representative body, but they are empowered to make new ones which they may think more suitable, and substitute them for the by-laws decided upon by the local district council. It seems to me that that is introducing an entirely new principle into our system of local government. I have every respect for, and confidence in, the Local Government Board, but I should be jealous of giving them such a power as that. Nor do I think it would be fair to our local representative bodies throughout the country. The Government propose to give this Bill a Second Reading, and refer the whole subject to a Select Committee. That is a course in which we on this side of the House most readily concur, and we shall offer no opposition to it.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, we entirely agree with the noble Lord who has just sat down in thinking that this subject is one which must be handled with great caution. It deals with a difficult and intricate matter, and although we fully realise the excellent objects with which the Bill has been introduced, although we feel that the Bill is, as the noble Lord who spoke second described it, a well-meant Bill, we desire to carefully guard ourselves against being supposed to accept the whole of the provisions which it contains. For example, Clause 5, to which my noble friend referred a moment ago, would certainly have the effect of imposing on the Local Government Board an extremely difficult and laborious duty, and I think we should examine it from that point of view before we make up our minds to pass it into law. With regard to Clause 2, the other clause specially singled out by my noble friend, I am under the impression, although I am not quite sure whether the words of the clause fully realise the intention of the promoters of the Bill, that what they intend is that isolated buildings should not be completely emancipated from the whole of the by-laws, but only from by-laws of a certain kind, notably those which deal with the question of structural solidity and precautions against fire. I do not gather, however, that it is at all intended that, because a building is isolated, it should therefore be emancipated as far as sanitary regulations are concerned.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Clause 4 provides for that. But it would be quite possible for a house to be built with its floor below the level of the ground, or for a cottage to be constructed out of turf.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I assume that in the substituted by-laws there would be precautions against that.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The Bill does not propose to substitute new by-laws.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: These are precisely the kind of points that require careful examination and consideration by a Select Committee of your Lordships' House. I understand that the object of the promoters of the Bill is to steer a prudent course between the jerry-builder on the one hand and the pedants of constructional and sanitary science on the other. I think it is quite clear that it is the general feeling of the House that the Bill should be read a second time, and we, at any rate, do not intend to oppose it.

*LORD HYLTON: My Lords, if I may be permitted I should like to thank the House for the extremely kind manner in which the Bill has been received. I can assure the noble Lord opposite that his suspicions are not justified. The Bill does not seek to promote the building of cottages which are not fit for habitation. Those who erect these buildings must be given credit for desiring to build houses fit for habitation. The exemptions that are given as regards the material of which the cottages are constructed and so forth will be more than compensated for by the area which will necessarily be added to the cottages if they are to have the benefit of exemption. I would point out, in reply to what has been said on the subject, that Clause 5 does not actually empower the Local Government Board, upon the mere representation of any five ratepayers, to disallow by-laws where they are found unsuitable to the district; for there is a provision requiring the deposit of £50, which is intended to prevent frivolous objections being made. The noble Lord opposite spoke as if the Local Government Board would be permitted by this Bill to do away with by-laws that had been passed by district councils and substitute their own, but the by-laws already in existence are not the creation of the district councils. District councils only have power to apply to the Local Government Board to give them a set of building by-laws. I am quite willing to accept the suggestion of His Majesty's Government that the Bill be read a second time and referred to a select Committee.

LORD STANMORE: My Lords, I only rise to say that being intimately connected with one of the districts to which the noble Lord who introduced this Bill has referred, I can bear my emphatic testimony to the fact that there is not the slightest exaggeration in the circumstances which he has related to the House; and, further, that what those of us who are interested in cottage-building in that part of the country chiefly feel as a grievance is the intolerable absurdity of making us build a single cottage in a field as if it were a house in a street in a town.

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Lord Wolverton.*)

THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, before the Motion is put I should like to ask the noble Marquess the Leader of the House a Question on a technical point. It seems to us on this side of the House desirable that the reference to this Committee should be as wide as possible, and I should like to know whether the noble Marquess thinks, by referring the Bill as it stands to a Select Committee, it would be possible to deal with the question of rural housing and the by-laws applying to rural housing. If not, it may be advisable, perhaps, to widen the terms of reference, because it will be inconvenient when the Committee is appointed if it is found that it is not able to deal with the entire question of rural housing.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I confess I think it would be desirable that we should have time to consider the suggestion of my noble friend. I myself do not feel persuaded that it would be advantageous to extend the inquiry to be conducted by this particular Committee to the whole question of the rural housing of the poorer class.

On Question, Motion agreed to. Bill referred to a Select Committee.

BRITISH TRADE IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the present position of the negotiations with the German Government with respect to the trade in the Marshall and Cardine groups of Islands.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I am able to give my noble friend some information which I hope may be of interest to him, and to those who, like him, take an interest in this question. Since the subject of British trade in the Marshall Islands was discussed I have received a communication of a most considerate character from the German Government. In the first place, the German Government admit that the Convention of 1886 entitles German and British subjects in the possessions of both Powers in the Western Pacific Ocean to equal treatment; although they contend that both Governments are given by that agreement a free hand in regard to the imposition of taxes and duties within their own territories. The German Government hold that the regulations which were issued by them with regard to shipping tolls and export duties on copra are, in fact, applied equally to both German and British subjects, and that they are therefore not inconsistent with the convention; they also maintain that there is no contradiction between the convention and the agreement concluded in 1888 with the Jaluit Company, because they think that the rights of each Government to administer independently their own possessions were in no way restricted by the terms of the convention. However, although the German Government maintain that their attitude was perfectly justified from a legal point of view, they feel that it would be most undesirable that in connection with a matter of such trifling importance there should be any serious difference of opinion between the two Governments; and, as the Government of His Majesty believe that the effect of the agreement of 1888 has been to give preferential treatment to the Jaluit Company, the German Government have decided to terminate that agreement at the close of the present financial year—March 31st, 1906. The result of that will be that after that date the administration of the Marshall Islands, and especially the collection of public revenues, will be transferred from the company to the Imperial authorities.

I am further able to say that the German Government intend to proceed immediately to a revision of the regulations at present in force in the islands with regard to the levying of public revenues, and that they intend to remodel those regulations on the basis of "balancing the revenue and expenditure." I take that to mean that the revenue will be collected with the object of meeting the necessary expenditure, and not with the object of protecting in an especial manner any particular interests. Measures adapted for this purpose will come into force on October 1st next. The effect of this statement, I think, is to show that before long the monopoly of the Jaluit Company will disappear; and although of course, we are at present without knowledge as to the new arrangements which may be introduced, we may hope that the abuses to which my noble friend called attention, and which in our view certainly did exist under the administration of the company, will come to an end.

That is the main point. There are, of course, subsidiary points, such as the claim of a British firm for compensation and the treatment of a British vessel the owners of which complained of the manner in which they were treated in the Marshall Islands, but these are still under investigation, and unless my noble friend particularly desires it I do not propose to say anything about them now. In the case, however, of the ship "Ysabel," which it was stated had been refused a supply of water when she touched at the Marshall Islands, I think it is due to the German Government to give their explanation, which was that the vessel would have been given an ample supply of drinking water, but, there being a scarcity of water in the islands, they could only have given her enough boiler water to carry her to another group of islands, at which a sufficient supply might have been obtained. That is the only subsidiary point which I think it necessary to touch upon now, unless my noble friend desires to ask any further Questions.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: The noble Marquess has obtained a more satisfactory statement from the German Government than I had expected. His speech will be read with considerable satisfaction both in this country and in Australia, and I do not think I can do better than leave the further negotiations in his hands without more comment.

House adjourned at Six oclock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 11th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time.

Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time.

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time.

Truro Water Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time.

Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Highland Railway Bill; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]: Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords]; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

DOGS (PROTECTION) BILL.

Two Petitions from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions for alteration; from Banff; and Linlithgow; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSE-LETTING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, against; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, against; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Edmonton, against; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACT, 1898.

Petition from Aberdeen, for extension to Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from the Council of the Women's Liberal Federation; Hammersmith; Hornsea; and Portobello; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT, 1889).

Copy presented, of Report of the Board of Education for the year 1903–4 on the Administration of Schools, under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 158.]

EAST INDIA (ESTIMATE).

Copy presented, of Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India for 1904–5, compared with the results of 1903–4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 159.]

EAST INDIA (FINANCE AND REVENUE ACCOUNTS).

Copy presented, of Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of

India for 1903–4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (HOME ACCOUNTS).

Copy presented, of Home Accounts of the Government of India [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 160.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3369 and 3370 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRAMWAYS ACT, 1870.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the Consent of the County Council of Glamorgan to the Aberavon Tramways Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 161.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Address for "Return showing the estimated position, as regards Capital Expenditure, of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1905, and the proposed Expenditure thereon during 1905–6 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 138, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Price.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Salaries of Clerks in the Veterinary Branch of the Irish Department of Agriculture.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state in how many instances the salaries of the veterinary branch clerks of the Irish Agricultural Department have been reduced since the inception of that Department; for what reason the reductions, if any, were made; and whether the clerks employed by the Irish Agricultural Department have suffered thereby.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Four temporary clerks in the veterinary branch, with pay at the fixed rate of £1 15s. a week, on being appointed over three years ago to permanent pensionable posts as assistant clerks of the abstractor class, entered the scale of salary for that grade at £90 a year, rising by annual increments of £2 10s. to £120, and thence by £5 to £150. The initial salary of £90 was determined in accordance with the practice of requiring a reduction of commencing salary in consideration of the grant of the privileges of a secured position, an annual increment, and a retiring pension. This reduction was for one year, the actual amount being £1 5s. per annum. Afterwards the salary was increased in accordance with the scale of increments named.

Salaries and Retiring Allowances in the Veterinary Branch of the Irish Department of Agriculture.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many permanent clerks in the veterinary branch of the Irish Agricultural Department have upwards of ten years service and salaries of less than £100 a year; what is the maximum salary which these clerks can attain, and how many years will it take to reach such maximum; how many years service, temporary and permanent, have these clerks under the Crown; and how many years will they have served under their present scale before they become entitled to £1 a week retiring allowance.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Two of these permanent clerks have upwards of ten years service and salaries of less than £100 a year. The maximum of their present grade is £150, and it will take fifteen years to reach it. These clerks have had three years permanent service and seven and a half years previous temporary service. Retiring allowances are governed by the provisions of the Superannuation Acts, to which the hon. Member is referred.

Royal Naval Reserve—Enrolment of Warrant Engineers and Engine-Room Artificers.

MR. HARRIS (Tynemouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty the total number of enrolments up to the end of last year in the new classes of engineers and engine-room artificers in the Royal Naval Reserve admitted under the special regulations issued in July, 1903; the names of the ten ports in the United Kingdom at which the highest number of enrolments took place in this class, with the figures for each port; and whether it is proposed to recognise the services of the various local registrars of Naval Reserves for the manner in which they have discharged the additional duties imposed by the regulations referred to.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The numbers of warrant engineers and engine-room artificers, Royal Naval Reserve, borne on December 31st, 1904, were :—

Warrant engineers - -	30
Engine-room artificers -	604
Total - -	634

The ten ports at which the largest numbers of enrolments took place were :—

Glasgow - - - -	152
Newcastle - - -	74
Liverpool - - -	52
Cardiff - - - -	47
Belfast - - - -	34
South Shields - - -	28
Sunderland - - -	28
Barrow - - - -	26
North Shields - - -	23
Aberdeen - - - -	22

The matter referred to in the last part of the hon. Member's Question is under consideration in consultation with the other Departments concerned.

Infant Life Protection.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the prosecution in the Manchester Police Court of a woman charged under the Infant Life Protection Act, at the instance of the Prestwich Board of Guardians, and the statement of the magistrate, in ordering a forfeiture of the money paid to the defendant, to the effect that there was no other form of penalty provided for by the Act and no means of recovering the money; and whether, in view of the frequency of such cases and the difficulty of dealing with them, he will consider the advisability of strengthening the law in relation thereto.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am in communication with the magistrates about the case referred to. This case, and that to which the hon. Member drew my attention on the 5th of this month†, appear to have arisen out of the practices of the same persons. As I then said, I fear I cannot undertake to introduce legislation to amend the existing Infant Life Protection Act, nor to recommend that facilities should be given to a Bill for that purpose.

Bristol Postal Staff—Timekeepers' Position.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the whole of the telegraph staff at Bristol, including the women operators and male supervisors, have their hours of attendance and periods of casual relief registered by men holding lower official positions; whether, seeing that this duty was performed previously by members of the telegraph department holding the rank of clerk and in view of the protests of the staff against the change, he will explain why the change has been made; and whether he will direct that the practice be discontinued.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware of the arrangement to which the hon. Member refers, and I do not propose to alter it as I see no reason why the mechanical operation of recording times of arrival and departure should be performed by men of high official position.

Late Duty of Female Telegraph Operator at Omagh.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): To ask the Postmaster-General is he aware that a female sorting clerk and telegraphist has been kept on duty after 10 p.m. at Omagh rail telegraph office on several occasions within the past six months; and, if so, what steps does he purpose taking in the matter.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have no information about the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. The matter appears to be one which can be and should be dealt with locally.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 1027.

Grants to Pupil Teachers.

Sir JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Board of Education will take into consideration an alteration of its rules respecting the payment of grant earned by pupil teachers, so that the grant may be earned by pupil teachers attending schools carried on for private profit, if such schools are approved of by the Board of Education and such grant is paid to the local education authority.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) If the pupil-teacher centre is an independent institution structurally and financially, and is not carried on for private profit, no objection would be raised by the Board merely because the teachers engaged at the pupil-teacher centre are also engaged in giving instruction at a private school. If, however, the pupil teachers receive instruction together with the students at the private school, a grant could not be paid in respect of such teaching. The Board cannot make any alteration in this restriction by which grants are not payable to schools conducted for private profit.

Income-Tax (Schedule D).

Mr. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the amount of income-tax leviable under Schedule D in England, Ireland, and Scotland respectively for the year ending April 5th, 1905; and what was the amount outstanding in each country on April 20th, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The amounts charged under Schedule D for England, Scotland, and Ireland for the year 1904–5 were approximately as under:—

	£
England . .	16,828,000
Scotland . .	2,078,000
Ireland . .	497,000
	£19,403,000

The amounts outstanding cannot be given.

Action of District Magistrate at Hooghly Gaol, India.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that an Afghan youth named Ayoom Khan, who in February last was awaiting his trial before a subordinate magistrate on a charge of theft, was, by order of the district magistrate, Mr. Carey, removed from Hooghly Gaol, summarily tried, and sentenced by him to nominal imprisonment until the following morning; and, seeing that the Lieutenant-Governor stigmatised the district magistrate's conduct as hardly discreet, will he ask the Government of India to make some inquiry into the case and report thereon.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I have no information as to the case referred to in the Question; but, if the facts are as stated, it seems to me to be one which has been adequately dealt with by the proper authorities.

Imperator v. A. C. Rolt.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received from the Government of India a report of the proceedings in the case of Imperator *v.* A. C. Rolt, tried in the Calcutta High Court on the 20th December; and can he see his way to lay Papers on the subject upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The report has not yet been received.

Election of Irish Poor Law Officials.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that prior to the recent elections of master and matron of the Tipperary Workhouse, the board of guardians unanimously passed a resolution asking the Local Government Board to permit the elections to be held by ballot; and whether, seeing that the election of Poor Law officials in England is held by ballot, and that elections by open voting cause expense to candidates and annoyance to guardians through canvassing, steps will be taken to assimilate the English and

Irish procedure in the election of Poor Law officials.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The facts are as stated in the first inquiry. Article 10 of the Local Government Board's general regulations dealing with the proceedings of boards of guardians requires that votes shall be given openly and not by ballot or in any other secret manner. A requirement of similar purport exists in England, and it is, therefore, incorrect to say that the election of Poor Law officials in England is held by ballot.

Distress in the Newport Division, Westport (County Mayo).

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the distress which prevails in the Newport Division of the Westport (county Mayo) Union; and will he see that relief works are started for the purpose of relieving such distress.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Local Government Board have made inquiries in this district, but cannot find that any acute distress exists such as would render it necessary to supplement the ordinary Poor Law by means of relief works. If, however, the hon. Member will furnish the names and addresses of distressed persons for whom adequate provision has not been made, immediate attention will be given to the matter.

Relief of Congestion in the Newport Division of Westport Union.

DR. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the Congested Districts Board, which has purchased large tracts of land in the Newport Division of Westport Union, has not yet divided those lands for the purpose of relieving congestion; and why the Board has not given any employment on such land.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Board have agreed to purchase the lands referred to, but have not yet become the vested owners pending an investigation of the title. In the meantime, the lands cannot be divided.

Epizootic Lymphangitis Amongst Army Horses.

MR. HAYES FISHER (Fulham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has any information as to the source of infection of the ninety-six fresh cases of epizootic lymphangitis which have recurred among Army horses since last July; whether the clothes and boots of all persons who have come into contact with those horses have been so treated as to render them non-infectious; whether, seeing that this disease has existed in this country since 1902 and that there does not appear to be any abatement of it, he purposes, with the view of allaying the anxiety among horse owners, to adopt any further measures for its extirpation; and whether he can hold out any hope that the measures now adopted are likely to stamp out the disease.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The source of infection probably originated in previous cases in the same units. All desirable measures of disinfection are taken, but it has not been considered necessary to destroy the attendants' clothing or boots. The disease has practically ceased in the Army, only nine convalescent cases now remaining in strict isolation.

South African Honours for Militia and Volunteer Battalions.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that Militia battalions which sent out their Reservists (numbering in many cases over 200) to the war in South Africa are not permitted to bear upon their colours the words "South Africa" with the dates of service unless the whole regiment went out, whereas Volunteer battalions, which sent out less than half the number of men, are the recipients of full honours as if the whole corps went out, he can explain why the one service is treated differently to the other in this respect; and whether this difference of treatment will be rectified by conferring upon the Militia battalions the same privileges as have been accorded to the Volunteers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The difference in treatment with regard to inscriptions upon the colours is due to the fact that the Militia Reservists referred to were under an obligation to serve, if necessary, out of the United Kingdom, and received a retaining fee accordingly, and that, therefore, they were in an entirely different category from those forces who served voluntarily in South Africa.

The Judge-Advocate General.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the position of Judge-Advocate General is still vacant; and, if so, by whom are the duties appertaining to that office, including the revision of the proceedings of Courts-martial and the sentences pronounced by these Courts, and personal access to the Sovereign in tendering advice with reference to these proceedings and sentences, discharged.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I am advised by the Secretary of State for War that at the present time the duties of the Judge-Advocate General are being performed by the Deputy-Judge-Advocate General.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Guns.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the total number of 12-inch Mark VIII. guns which have been completed for the Navy; what is the number of these guns landed for repairs and the number of these awaiting repairs, exclusive of those landed for repairs; what is the total number of 12-inch Mark IX. guns which have been completed for the Navy; what is the number under construction for the naval service; and what is the number of ships completed or built which carry 12-inch Mark IX. armament.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The total number of 12-inch Mark VIII. guns that have been completed for the Navy is seventy-five, viz., sixty mounted in ships and fifteen spare. Two of these guns have been landed for repairs. One other, which has been used for proof purposes, is awaiting repairs. The total number of 12-inch Mark IX. guns that have been completed for the Navy is ninety-seven, viz., seventy-six mounted in ships and twenty-one spare. Thirteen more are under construction. Nineteen ships carrying these guns are completed. Three ships building carry these guns. A number of 12-inch Mark VIII. guns have been landed for adjustment from ships since the defect was observed in the guns of the "Majestic." These have been exchanged with reserve guns, because reserves were available at the time, and it was considered desirable to utilise the reserve guns rather than carry out the adjustments on board. The adjustment is of a minor nature and is one which will, in future, be done on board the ships or on shore as most convenient.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): Has any change recently been made in the proportions of guns of each class kept in reserve.

*MR. PRETYMAN: No change has been made. The present number is the number which has been adopted since 1902.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: Has there been any alteration since the statement on the subject made by Lord Goschen before he left the Admiralty.

*MR. PRETYMAN: I am not aware of any alteration. I made a statement a year ago as to the number of reserve guns. I do not call to mind Lord Goschen's statement.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Can the hon. Gentleman say whether since that time any change has been made in the proportions of the reserves kept in certain foreign fleets; also how long it will be before the guns which have been taken out of the reserves for temporary purposes will be again replaced in the reserves.

*MR. PRETYMAN: Should it be decided to retube any of these guns, the process will take three months. As the right hon. Baronet is aware, it is desirable sometimes to retube guns before it is absolutely necessary in order that the life of all the guns may not run out together. But with regard to readjustment, that is a matter only of a day or two, so that the guns will be available in the reserves immediately. I am unable to answer without notice the Questions of the right hon. Baronet as to the proportions in reserves in foreign fleets.

Army Pensions—Private M'Donagh, Connaught Rangers.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will inquire into the case of Thomas M'Donagh, late a private in the Connaught Rangers, and who served in South Africa during the recent war for 277 days, and received a wound at the battle of Pieter's Hill, from which he was subsequently invalided to Netley Hospital, and, after medical examination and by the direction of the Army medical authorities, was admitted as a free patient to the Royal Infirmary, but in whose case a stoppage of the 2s. per day whilst in hospital was made from his pay, and if he will be recouped this amount.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): This pensioner was receiving free treatment at the Royal Infirmary, Dublin, and as it is not intended to grant at the same time the advantages of such treatment and a full pension, a part of this man's pension was duly appropriated.

Military Manœuvres near Dublin—Damage at Drimnagh Castle.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the correspondence between Mr. John Gore, solicitor, of Dublin, and the military authorities as to the damage done by the trespass of he troops on the lands and demesne of Drimnagh Castle, county Dublin, during manœuvres and shooting practice; whether he is aware that the fences were levelled and broken down, and that the supply of milk from the dairy cattle has been considerably diminished by fright; and whether he will see that such steps are taken as will indemnify the owner for the loss sustained by him by this breach of the law.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A report of the case has been forwarded from Ireland from which matters appear to stand as follow: In May, 1904, the owner, Mr. Hatch, claimed compensation of £10 for damage done on April 25th to the fences, etc., by the cattle breaking away owing to the firing by the troops. The claims were carefully considered on the spot on May 24th by the military authorities, and Mr. Hatch was offered £2. On June 4th his solicitor, Mr. Gore, made a claim, which had not been mentioned by Mr. Hatch at his meeting with the military representatives on May 24th, for damage to the milch cows through fright, and threatened legal proceedings. On 15th March, 1905, he asked the Chief Crown Solicitor to accept service of a writ and was informed that the proper proceedings against the Secretary of State for War were by Petition of Right.

Chinese Recalcitrants in the Transvaal.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state how many Chinese labourers in the Transvaal have suffered imprisonment for desertion, refusal to work, and travelling without a permit; how many have suffered imprisonment for riot; and how many have been sent back to China, from the time the labourers began to arrive in the Transvaal until the latest date for which figures are available.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The statistics of imprisonment to the end of January are published in Cd. 2401, see pages 89–91. The figures for February are as follows—desertion and refusal to work, not distinguished, thirty-eight; travelling without permit, eight. The total number repatriated to December 31st was 322. I have no later information yet.

White Labour in the Transvaal.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state by what percentage the number of coloured labourers, apart from Chinese, employed in the gold mines of the Transvaal, increased between March, 1904, and March 31st, 1905; and by what percentage the number of white men so employed increased in the same period.

Mr. LYTTELTON: The percentage of increase appears to be for coloured labour 32·1 and for white labour 27·9.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: How is it that white labour has increased at a smaller rate than black labour, and that Chinese labour has apparently resulted in no increase at all in white labour?

Mr. LYTTELTON: Before the introduction of Chinese labour, experiments were made for the introduction of unskilled white labour, and those experiments were, I believe, in the opinion of everybody qualified to judge, a total failure.

Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the opinion of Mr. Creswell, that white labour was successful?

[No Answer was returned.]

Salonica—Massacre at Kuktish.

Sir A. HAYTER (Walsall): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any report has been received of the inquiry into the massacre at Kuktish in the Salonica vilayet on February 15th by the Turkish troops, in which forty unarmed persons were murdered, forty-three houses burnt, 117 houses looted, and twelve women violated; and whether any compensation will be paid or any punishment inflicted upon the authors of this outrage.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS) Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): The figures quoted by the hon. Member do not tally with those mentioned in the reports which have reached us, but the findings of the Commission of Inquiry have not yet been communicated to His Majesty's Government. We understand that a sum of £150 has been granted by the Turkish Government for the immediate relief of distress.

Samoa.

Colonel DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any prospect of the British claims, due to damage done in Samoa in 1899, being paid, and what has been the cause of the delay.

Earl PERCY: The examination of the various claims, British and foreign, has necessarily taken a considerable time, but that of the British has now been completed, and steps are being taken to trace the claimants and to pay those whose claims to compensation have been substantiated.

Markyate Motor Fatality.

Mr. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the accident which resulted in the death of a boy named William Henry Clifton, at Markyate, in the county of Hertford, on Tuesday, April 18th, 1905; and, if so, will he state what means of communication exist between the county police of the counties of Hertford and Bedford along the main roads of those counties; and whether there is any telephonic communication between the police of Dunstable, Markyate, Redbourn, and St. Albans, and between the Hertford county constabulary and the city police of St. Albans; and, if not, whether he will take steps to secure the provision of such inter-communication as will meet the case of similar accidents.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): My attention has been directed to this case. I understand from the Chief Constable of Hertfordshire that the St. Albans city police have means of telephonic communication with the Hertfordshire police through the National Exchange, that there is no telephonic communication from Dunstable to St. Albans *via* Markyate, and that the question of establishing such communication between St. Albans. Redbourn, and Markyate will come before the Standing Joint Committee of Hertfordshire, who, I would remind the hon. Member, are the police authority concerned, next month.

Monastic and Conventual Private Burial Grounds.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is any official list of the private burying grounds in connection with monastic and conventual institutions; and, if so, what is their number and how many have been granted during the past five years.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what country is referred to in the Question.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I can only speak as far as England and Wales are concerned. I am not aware of the existence of any such list as regards England and Wales, and I am informed by the President of the Local Government Board, with whom, since the passing of the Burial Act, 1900, rests the duty of giving approval, when approval is required, to the opening of new burial grounds, that he has no record of the nature indicated.

Aliens.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many aliens arrived in this country in 1904; how many left this country; and how many of the aliens who arrived were sailors; and whether he has any information he can produce to the House to show that of the 82,000 aliens not described as transmigrants who arrived the greater proportion probably settled in this country.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The Board of Trade Return, which is in the hands of hon. Members, shows that the figures are as follows:—194,986 aliens arrived in this country from Continental ports, 99,278 of these were stated on the lists to be en route to other countries; 12,863 were seamen (only very few of whom can be prospective settlers). Deducting these two last figures from the first, we have a remainder of 82,845. Of these 7,697 were subsequently ascertained by officers of the Customs to be, in fact, on their way to other countries. Deducting these latter, we obtain a net remainder of 75,148 to be accounted for. It must not be inferred, as the Board of Trade point out, that these figures represent the total number of alien immigrants who actually settled in this country. Among them there is no doubt some drifting back to Europe, and some moving onward to America, but the known extent of this does not amount to more than 2,000 or 3,000 (chiefly cases assisted by the Jewish Board of Guardians). Probably some of those stated to be en route to other countries in fact stay here, temporarily or permanently. These figures relate only to arrivals from Europe, and do not include arrivals from America, etc., whether rejected European aliens or original immigrants from America.

MR. EMMOTT: The right hon. Gentleman has not stated how many aliens left this country.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: There is no possibility of obtaining information as to the exact number leaving. All we can ascertain is the number of transmigrants.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is there any reliable means of knowing how many are transmigrants?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: We have the actual number who come here described as transmigrants. All that can be ascertained is the number of transmigrants, and the number of those who to the knowledge of the Customs officers leave after staying here for a short time.

MR. LOUGH: How do they get those figures?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: By inquiring at the ports. But it is impossible to say exactly how many leave after a short settlement, as they depart in small numbers and are returned as ordinary passengers.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Then we are to take it that the right hon. Gentleman's figures are to a large extent uncertain?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have stated all through the debates on the aliens question that it is impossible to obtain all the figures with exact accuracy. But the Board of Trade state in their Report that the figures which I have quoted can be relied on.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Is it not the fact that the Board of Trade in their Report do give the total number of the aliens who leave this country, whether recent arrivals or old arrivals, which is the Question of my hon. friend, and the Question the right hon. Gentleman says he cannot answer?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: If the hon. Gentleman has got the information I do not see why he should ask the Question.

Theft through Starvation.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of James Nicholson, aged 17 years, of no home, who was sentenced last Saturday at the South-Western Court to 14 days imprisonment for stealing a loaf of bread, and to the fact that Nicholson told the policemen who arrested him that he was hungry and destitute; and whether, in view of the Court missionary's testimony to Nicholson's character, he will order his release.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have called for a report from the magistrate who dealt with this case, but I have not yet received his reply. As soon as I do so, I will carefully consider the matter.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind the man has already served a week of his sentence, and will he see he is released immediately?

[No Answer was returned.]

Motor-Car Speeds in London Streets.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will, in considering the question of the desirability of limiting the speed of motor-cars in London streets, recognise the importance of Clause 9 of the Motor Act giving certain powers to the local authorities, and the fact that Clause 1 of the Act did not alter the Common Law of the land.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The limitation of the speed of motor-cars in London streets does not come within my jurisdiction, but, as I have already explained, within that of the Local Government Board on application made by the local authorities. Due weight will no doubt be given to the considerations to which the hon. Member refers; and I may remind the hon. Member that the Motor-Car Act is a temporary one, and will come before Parliament for renewal or review next session.

Identification of, and Speed Regulations for Motor-Cars.

*Mr. SLACK: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the fatal accident at Markyate, in Hertfordshire, on 18th April, he will make regulations by virtue of the powers given by the Motor-Car Act, 1903, for the better identification of motor-cars and the better regulation of the speed of motor-cars when passing through towns, villages, and populous places, so as to prevent, as far as possible, the recurrence of similar accidents.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I am not aware of any better method of identifying motor-cars than that already in force. The Local Government Board have no general power of regulating the speed of motor-cars when passing through towns, villages, and other populous places.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of ordering the increase of the size of the numbers on motor-cars to some such size as is used on fishing boats.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have no reason for supposing that the present figures are not easily discernible.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is it not the fact that in this very case the number of the motor-car was so small that it was found impossible to see it clearly?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand that that was in consequence of the dust which was raised.

*MR. SLACK: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of regulations being made under Section 7 of the Motor-Car Act, 1903, on the lines I have suggested in the Question?

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): And will the right hon. Gentleman use his influence to obtain an early discussion of the matter?

[No Answer was returned.]

Winchester Motor-Car Regulations.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state by whom the application of the Corporation of the city of Winchester for power to limit the speed of motor-cars to ten miles an hour whilst passing through that city was opposed at the local inquiry.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The application was opposed at the inquiry on behalf of the Automobile Club, the Motor Union, the Hampshire Motor Union, and an individual resident of Winchester. Evidence in support of the opposition was given by eleven witnesses.

Telephone Agreement.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in the event of an opportunity not occurring for the passing of his Motion to refer the Telephone Agreement to a Select Committee sufficiently early to give time for the proper consideration of the said Agreement, he will agree, following a similar course adopted regarding the Provisional Agreement of 1894, to let the Agreement stand over until next session.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply to the Member for Camberwell on May 4th† last.

Nitrogen Bacteria.

COLONEL SADLER (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if his attention has been directed to the success attending the inoculation of soil with nitrogen bacteria in the United States and in other countries; and whether the experiments and investigations of the Board have been alike encouraging; and, if so, is it intended to distribute the inoculating material among agriculturists of this country as is being done abroad.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): Yes, as I stated recently in reply to a Question by the hon. Baronet the Member for Salisbury, we are closely watching the experiments now being made in connection with the use of nitrogen-producing bacteria in the United States and elsewhere, and the value of such bacteria is now being tested at several of the agricultural colleges in this country. No results of value can, however, be obtained until the crops under treatment are mature. I may add that both the American and the German preparations are now being manufactured by private firms in those countries and can be purchased by any farmers here who may desire to obtain them.

Abstractor Clerks' Memorial.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the memorial presented in January, 1904, from the assistant clerks known as abstractor clerks has yet been considered by the Lords Commissioners of the

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 928.

Treasury; and, if so, whether he is prepared to say if any improvement has been made in their *status* and positions.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The decision of the Treasury on the memorial in question has been conveyed to heads of Departments. Certain improvements have been sanctioned in the pay and conditions of service of the abstractors.

Humphrey Williams' Charity.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Tunbridge, as a Charity Commissioner, whether his attention has been called to the administration of Humphrey Williams' Charity (Kent Street Estate) and in particular to the circumstances under which parts of the property, originally left in 1653 for the benefit of poor aged people residing in the parishes of St. George-the-Martyr, Southwark, and St. Mary, Newington, have been transferred, without valuable consideration, to the ecclesiastical authorities as sites for a church, a parsonage house, and a day school; whether he is aware that the revenue derived from the site for the parsonage house, which has not been erected, is received by the ecclesiastical authorities, and will he say to what purpose it is being applied; whether the day school has been discontinued; and, if so, for what purpose the building is now used; under what legal authority this alienation of property took place; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN, (Kent, Tunbridge): The attention of the Commissioners has been called by the London County Council to the circumstances in question, in a letter stating that they are advised, as is the case, that these transfers were legally made, under the Church Building Acts and School Sites Act, 1841, respectively, and that the present user is not contrary to the statutes. It is understood that the parsonage site is now let and the rent applied in augmentation of the benefice; and that the day school is now closed and the premises used for parish purposes; but the jurisdiction in these respects is now that of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and of the Board of Education respectively and not of the Charity Commissioners.

Afforestry in Ireland.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to take any steps with a view to preserve the few woods and plantations still left standing in Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The Department of Agriculture are alive to the importance of this question. They have caused special inquiries to be made, and have been in communication with the Estates Commissioners with a view to the utilisation of Section 4 (1) of the Act of 1903. The Department have themselves purchased, as trustees under this section, certain woods which will be utilised in connection with the Department's forestry station in county Wicklow. The Department's funds are not sufficient for any comprehensive scheme of forestry development, but facilities are being provided under the county agricultural and horticultural schemes for encouraging the planting of trees and the preservation of existing woods by occupiers.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Will action be taken to prevent landlords from cutting down the timber on their estates when selling under the Land Purchase Act.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have never heard of such a suggestion. I had better have notice.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) asked if the Government would give facilities to an association recently formed in Ireland to plant trees.

MR. WALTER LONG: I must ask for notice of that also.

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state in how many instances the salaries of the veterinary branch clerks of the Irish Agricultural Department have been reduced since the inception of that Department; for what reason the reductions, if any, were made; and whether the clerks employed by the Irish Agricultural Department have suffered thereby.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many permanent clerks in the veterinary branch of the Irish Agricultural Department have upwards of ten years' service and salaries of less than £100 a year; what is the maximum salary which these clerks can attain, and how many years will it take to reach such maximum; how many years service, temporary and permanent, have these clerks under the Crown; and how many years will they have served under their present scale before they become entitled to £1 a week retiring allowance.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It will be more convenient to furnish, with the Votes, printed replies to these Questions, and with the hon. Member's permission I will adopt that course.

Mr. NANNETTI: In view of the importance of the first Question, I certainly should like to have it answered in the House.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Then I must ask the hon. Member to put it down again.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Accounts.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the accounts rendered by the staff officer of the Royal Irish Constabulary Department, Dublin Castle, were certified as being correct for the period of four years ending December, 1903, and passed by the principal accountant and audit department, and that after the death of the said staff officer on January 6th, 1904, the accounts were found to disclose a deficiency of £433 10s. 4d.; and whether, in view of the neglect of duty on the part of the principal accountant and the officials of the audit department, he will say if the Inspector-General has taken any action in the matter of having the system of keeping the accounts inquired into; and further, what means have been adopted by the said department to recover the said sum of £433 10s. 4d.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The facts are as stated in the first part of the Question. The monthly accounts rendered by this officer were apparently correct, and were passed accordingly; but upon closing his accounts after his death, it was found that some of the vouchers which had been furnished by him were not genuine, and that there was a deficiency to the amount stated. Arrangements have since been made which will reduce to a minimum the risk of similar misappropriation of public money. The amount in default has been refunded to the department by the deceased's widow.

Mr. NANNETTI asked whether, in view of the trouble which had fallen on the widow, any consideration could be shown to her.

Mr. WALTER LONG replied that he feared nothing could be done, but he would inquire.

Irish Land Purchase—Tenants' Interests.

Mr. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have negotiated for the sale to them of the interests of farmers with leases or judicial tenancies whose rents exceed £200, with the view to the division of their farms amongst tenants in possession of uneconomic holdings; what has been the total sum advanced or sanctioned for this purpose up to 1st May last; and has the money so advanced been charged on the new holdings at the same rate as the Land Act annuities for the purchase of the landlords' interests.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No, Sir. The Commissioners inform me that advances under the Land Purchase Acts cannot be made for the purchase of tenants' interests.

Trustees for Grazing Lands and Turbary.

Mr. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of trustees for grazing lands and for turbary under the Land Act (Ireland), 1903, the Estates Commissioners have issued any code of rules for the guidance of these trustees, for their election at stated intervals, and also defining the classes of persons entitled to vote at these elections; and whether he can state in how many cases has it become necessary, up to 1st May last, to provide for the appointment of such trustees, and whether such appointment has been of a temporary or permanent nature.

MR. WALTER LONG: The reply to the first inquiry is in the negative. Under Section 20 of the Act of 1903, the trustees referred to hold the land vested in them on such terms as may be specified in the scheme framed in the particular case. Such a scheme has been settled and approved of in one case, and this scheme provides for the appointment of new trustees by the surviving or continuing trustees subject to the approval of the Land Commission.

Alleged Payment of Secret Commissions by Parliamentary Agents.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the admission of Messrs. Bircham and Co., Parliamentary agents, as to the payment of a sum of £116 13s. 6d. secret commission to the late town clerk of Holborn and to their statement that such commission was quite an ordinary percentage to pay; and if, having regard to the fact that this firm acts for other boroughs and also holds the position of Parliamentary agents to the Government, he proposes to take any steps, by Royal Commission or otherwise, to deal with this state of affairs.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): My attention has been called to the circumstances referred to, which have been the subject of correspondence in the public Press. I am advised that the payment in question to Messrs. Bircham and Co., a firm of the highest reputation, ought not to be called a secret commission, and they contend that it is an agency payment, recognised as such amongst solicitors, and paid in the usual way of business. They have acted for the person in question for eighteen years. If, however, this transaction is to be regarded as a commission received by Parliamentary agents, which is disputed, it may perhaps be convenient that I remind the House that commissions of this kind were not only the subject of discussion some years ago in Parliament, but that they are now engaging the attention of the Lord Chancellor and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords, and also of the Incorporated Law Society.

MR. BENN: May I ask is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this firm have returned, in addition to the sum of £116 given to the late town clerk of Holborn, a cheque to the value of £90 as belonging to the council.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that I have given all the information that I have got, but I will make further inquiry if Questions are put on the Paper.

MR. BENN: In view of the nature of the Answer, and as this is a very important matter, at the conclusion of Questions I shall ask leave to move the adjournment of the House in order that we may go fully into the matter.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): Is there any ground for suggesting that a secret commission paid by Parliamentary agents to the town clerk of a borough could possibly be lawful.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of that. I do not profess to know anything about it. I am not a practising solicitor or barrister, and the hon. and learned Gentleman is quite as qualified to say what the practice is as I am.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the right hon. Gentleman know whether in fact this was a commission, and whether in fact it was paid secretly?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I do not know.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Where is the Attorney-General?

MR. BENN: I beg to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the payment of £116 secret commission by Messrs. Bircham & Co., Parliamentary agents, to the late town clerk of Holborn, to their statement that such payment was customary, and to the fact that the Government have taken no action in the matter.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not think that the matter is urgent. The payment was made last year or even before that, and the cases were brought to the knowledge of the public some months ago. It is not a new matter or urgent in any sense.

MR. BENN: May I draw attention to the fact that these gentlemen, or rather a member of the firm, is still a servant of the Government, connected with the Treasury Department. These facts only came to light during the last few weeks at the trial of the town clerk of Holborn. The evidence given at the trial makes it perfectly clear that there can be no dispute about the facts. I respectfully submit that this is a matter which calls for the immediate attention of the House. It is a matter in which municipal morality is involved, and I would ask you, Sir, to reconsider your decision.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is only by a considerable stretch of ingenuity that it is possible to connect Messrs. Bircham with the Government in any way. I believe that they have occasionally done work for the Government as Parliamentary agents, but they are in no sense servants of the Government, or part of the hierarchy or of the official organisation of the Government. It cannot properly be considered that there is any urgency in the matter. The rule was drawn up to meet certain eventualities and it ought not to be stretched beyond those limits.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I desire to ask for information as to the course of public business next week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The business for Monday will be the Second Reading of the Budget Bill. I understand that the course of procedure most convenient to the House will be that a discussion on the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland should be taken first, and that any general discussion should be taken subsequent to that. If that is a convenient course it is not one to which I shall take objection. The first business after the Budget will, as far as I can see, be the Rating Bill, which will follow immediately after. I hope we shall be able to finish the Budget Bill on Monday.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): When is it proposed to take the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to state when the Second Reading of that Bill will be taken.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the question is one of increasing urgency and importance, and that riots are threatened in many parts of the country because there is no machinery for dealing with the unemployed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No doubt there may be difficulties here and there, but I cannot regard the Bill as a pressing one in the sense that it makes much difference whether the Bill is taken a little sooner or a little later. It is a winter grievance and not a summer one.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that 400 men in Leicester, some of whom have been out of work now for close on two years, yesterday demanded the passing of this Bill immediately. I venture to say the question is urgent all the year round.

[No Answer was returned.]

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): When will the Sale of Butter Bill be taken? Will it be next week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have sketched out the business for next week, and I do not know if the hon. Gentleman sees in the interstices a point at which this Bill might be taken. I confess I do not.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Is it intended to take it at an early date?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot hold out any expectation of that. I will take it as soon as I can, but how soon I cannot say.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Milvain; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Malcolm.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords], That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of McConnell's Divorce Bill, as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned.

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £58,595, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and other Expenses in the Department of His Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments, including Expenses in respect of Advances under The Light Railways Act, 1896."

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): If I depart from the single precedent which we have on this Vote and begin its discussion by a statement, it is because that, having listened to the debates which have taken place earlier in the year on subjects connected with both the Navy and the Army, it seems to me that probably it would be convenient to the Committee if I should endeavour to give some account of the conclusions we have arrived at on some of the most important subjects which have come under the consideration of the Committee of Defence.

I may, perhaps, fitly begin by endeavouring to remove a misconception which certainly has no justification in anything I have ever said or suggested, but which has taken deep root, and which I shall feel it to be my duty to contradict and to dispose of as often as I hear it. This error consists in supposing that the Committee of Defence is a new executive Department, added to the existing organisation of the Government, which has in some way the duty thrown upon it of supervising the Departmental work entrusted to the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War. Now that is not the case. The Committee of Defence is not an executive Committee; and if it were an executive Committee instead of being a consultative Committee it would be in the highest degree inexpedient that it should deal with matters of purely Departmental interest. If the Committee were to be treated as a Court of Appeal—and some hon. Gentlemen have endeavoured to say as much—against the decisions come to in their own Departments either by the First Lord of the Admiralty or the Secretary for War, in the first place the Committee would be hopelessly over-burdened, and in the second place, the efficiency of the

Departments which it is supposed to supervise would be destroyed and the responsibility of the Ministers at the head of them would be absolutely shattered. Our functions are not, indeed, less important, but they are of a wholly different character from those which a particular class of critics suppose. It is not for us to advise, much less to determine, what type of battleship, or armoured cruiser, or field gun shall be adopted, or what military organisation or naval distribution shall be accepted by the Government, by the House, and by the country. But, although these are not within the purview of our functions, I think that the longer our labours have gone on the more convinced, I believe, is every member of the Committee, every Minister who sits on that Committee, of the necessity of the work which the Committee carries out. I say that in no spirit of criticism of our predecessors, because we, for the most part, are ourselves first in this movement. But my sense of astonishment is a growing sense that we should ever have got on without some kind of organisation such as we have now.

Of course, from time to time the sort of questions with which this Committee has to deal have been confided to successive Committees appointed *ad hoc*, consisting of eminent sailors and soldiers, and no doubt in many cases with a strong civilian element. These Committees—and this is the main point to be remembered—kept no continuous record. They dealt with a single and isolated subject apart from other questions; and although their labours remained for all time in the Report which they gave to the Government or to the House, a series of Committees appointed *ad hoc* is a different thing from one having a continuous existence, and leaving behind records of its decisions, or it may be indecisions, for the instruction and use of those who from time to time are called to the service of the Crown as responsible Ministers. That want is filled by this Defence Committee as it never could be filled by a temporary Committee; and I venture to go further and to repeat what I have said before—namely, that as time goes on I am convinced that the various Colonies of the Empire will bring before this Committee matters in which they feel special interest, and will send to this Committee their representatives to act in respect of these matters on perfect equality with the members of the Committee who sit week after week in Whitehall. I do not venture to prophesy of what colonial developments this Committee may prove itself capable; but we have sown a seed which may bear great fruit, and we have already been enabled to lay foundations on which a noble building may be erected. Of that there is no question at all.

But the real and main function of this Committee comes in, in the first place, where two Departments of the home Government are concerned—like the War Office and the Admiralty, or the Foreign Office and the War Office and the Admiralty as often happens; and secondly, where the home Government and a Colonial Government have a common purpose to serve in connection with defence; and thirdly, to bring into coordination the Indian Government and the British Government for the purpose of common Indian defence. There is nobody who is at all acquainted with the history of the Anglo-Indian problem of Indian defence but has had it most forcibly brought to their minds how great has been the lack in past times of some body of this kind, and how exceedingly difficult it is even for this Committee to work with perfect smoothness and rapidity through the complex problems which the Governm of India and of this country have to face in common and have to deal with on some common and accpeted plan. I need not say that the number of topics that come under one or other of these heads is very great. Some of the topics themselves are comparatively small. For instance, there is the question of how the ports, commercial and other, of this country may be best defended. That is a question not for the Army alone or for the Navy alone, but a matter of common duty between the two; and there may be differences of opinion between them. It is only the Committee of Defence who can settle this question; and I may remark that the actual result of long and anxious deliberations which we have had on this subject is to reverse the hitherto accepted policy as to the advantage of defending our ports by the use of submarine mines. The Admiralty are of opinion, and the Committee of Defence agree in thinking, that the submarine mine is, at all events as far as this country is concerned, a very inexpedient method of attempting to secure the safety of these ports. It is a method more likely to produce an injury to the defenders of the ports or to the commercial interests concerned than to the enemy; and other methods should be substituted for this method which, in our opinion, is not only antiquated but dangerous. Some hon. Members may not have given attention to this subject, and therefore I remind them that in speaking of submarine mines I am not referring in the most distant way to the blockade mines, as they are called, which are playing so important a part in the Far Eastern War now going on. In regard to the use of the blockade mines, we are not going to allow ourselves to fall behind what we understand other nations are doing; but I cannot forbear expressing my opinion that the use of blockade mines is a subject that must and ought to come under the consideration of some intertional tribunal, that the damage and the danger to neutrals which must result from sowing broadcast in the waterways of the world these undirected engines of destruction is so great that I do not think civilised mankind can in the future allow them to be used in a haphazard fashion.

I propose, to-day, to confine my observations to the broader issues of national defence. I shall venture to divide national defence into the three branches —home defence, colonial defence, and Indian defence; and the House will recognise that when I mention these three great divisions, I cannot from the very nature of the case attempt to go into anything like every detail that each may suggest; aud that I can only indicate in somewhat broad outlines the conclusions at which the Committee of Defence have arrived.

The first of these great divisions is home defence, and it is certainly the most important. If home defence be ill-secured, the British Empire, though it may be a magnificent structure, a magnificent monument, rests on feet of clay. We are perfectly useless for purposes of defence in far-off seas if the very centre and heart of the Empire is really open to serious invasion. But though everybody recognises that this is the central problem of Imperial and national defence, we go on year after year with something in the nature of a profitless wrangle between the advocates of different schools to which the puzzled civilian attaches himself either on one side or the other, and which leaves in the general mind of the country an uneasy sense that, in spite of the millions we are spending on the Navy and the Army, the country is not after all secure against some sudden and unexpected attack levelled at us by neighbours with whom certainly we do not wish to quarrel, but who for some reason or other may desire to shatter the great fabric of our Empire. It seemed to us that this long-standing quarrel was the first matter with which we had to deal. And remember, this division of opinion goes far beyond the living memories among us. It goes right back to Elizabethan times. You will find the same two opposed schools urging the same arguments far back in the time of Drake. You will find that great soldiers in the sixteenth century believed the invasion of England possible—great Continental as well as great British soldiers; and you will find that British sailors did not believe it possible. If you go down the stream of time, you come to an exactly similar state of things during the Napoleonic Wars. There is no doubt that Napoleon conceived that invasion of these islands was possible. No man studying the facts can accept the hypothesis put forward by some historians that the materials, the men, and the ships which Napoleon assembled at Boulogne early in the last century were merely a feint to distract some other Power. It is certain that Napoleon believed invasion to be possible; and it is equally certain that Nelson believed it to be impossible. You come to a generation later, and you find the Duke of Wellington, in the forties, in a very famous communication which was made public at the time, expressing the most serious alarm, in terms almost pathetic in their intensity, as to the safety of these islands from invasion from across the Channel. Sailors, I believe, have been unwavering in their opinion. I am not aware of any considerable naval authority who has ever held that serious overseas invasion is a thing of which we need be greatly afraid. But that was the state of things which we found unaltered when we took up the subject; and it appeared to us, I do not say that agreement could be come to, but that something nearer agreement might be come to than ever had been come to before, if we could lay down a specific and concrete problem for discussion by our expert advisers—a problem which, if extreme in its character, should be extreme against this country, and should assume things far worse than they are ever likely to be; but a problem which should not belong either to the hypothesis advocated by the extreme military or the extreme naval school.

I will endeavour to explain what the hypothesis was which we devised in order to attempt to bring this matter, I will not say to a conclusion which would satisfy everybody, but which would at any rate satisfy every practical man who chose to devote his mind to the subject. We thought that we were going far enough in devising a hypothetical state of things adverse to this country if we assumed that our Army was abroad upon some oversea expedition and that our organised fleets were absent from home waters. I do not see that we could be asked to go much further than that. Then the question arises: What exactly do you mean by the Army being occupied in some oversea expedition, and what do you mean exactly when you say that your organised fleets are absent from home waters? How do you translate these two statements into concrete figures?

We thought that we could not be going far wrong as regards the Army if we assumed our military position to be what it was during the few days—for it was not more—at the very worst moment, from this point of view, of the South African War. As the House is aware, that war threw a strain upon our military resources quite unexpected in its magnitude, and the end of February or the beginning of March, 1900, was the lowest point reached during the whole of the war from the point of view of military defences at home; and as we were at the moment straining every nerve in meeting the unexpected crisis 7,000 miles away, it did not seem to us that that was otherwise than a reasonable hypothesis to take as showing the lowest depth which we were ever likely to reach in the matter of home defence. The actual state of the home Army at the beginning of that week — because the position improved afterwards—was as follows: We had 17,000 infantry and cavalry, and twenty-six batteries of artillery; and that was the Regular Force that we had at home in organised units. We had 141,000 Volunteers who would, under the existing organisation, be used for garrisons; there were 85,000 Volunteers remaining; there were regiments of Militia, and there were soldiers under age, soldiers ill, and soldiers insufficiently trained, who were not in any organised units at all. As regards the Volunteers, their number was large, but from the point of view of a field army they were not organised, and there was not in the country at that moment any machinery for organising them. There was no headquarters staff and no sufficient arrangements for instantaneously using them as a field army. Though no doubt, with sufficient notice, that organisation could be improvised more or less, it did not exist at the precise psychological moment to which I ask the House to direct its attention. That is what we mean by saying that our Army is absent on an oversea expedition.

But what do we mean by saying that the Fleet was away—had wandered off somewhere into space—and what degree of maritime helplessness did that leave us in? I ought, perhaps, before answering my own question, to say that this idea of our organised fleets being lost in obscurity, in some unknown ocean, is a very extreme one to take, and it is not one which I can bring myself to pretend to the House comes very much within the region of reasoned probability. But let us take it that the Mediterranean Fleet, and the Atlantic Fleet, and the Home Fleet, were, like the China Fleet, far away from these shores, incapable of taking any part in repelling invasion of our shores. It may be worth reminding the House that even if the Home Fleet of twelve battleships and the Atlantic Fleet of eight battleships were away, we should, under the new Admiralty system, have ready for sea in a comparatively few hours—I believe that six hours would be sufficient—six battleships, and six first-class cruisers in reserve, with nucleus crews ready to put to sea at very short notice—as soon as the fires are lighted, in fact—and capable, when they put to sea, of taking part in an action, because, as the House knows, they will be manned by crews thoroughly acquainted with them, who do not come as strangers, and who have gone through all those peace evolutions which are the necessary prelude to war. We should have at home besides, irrespective of the organised fleets of which I speak, the twelve cruisers which cruise in home waters; there would be twenty-four destroyers in commission; and there would be in reserve with nucleus crews, ready for very rapid action, no less than ninety-five more torpedo craft, some of them destroyers, some of them torpedo-boats proper. That would be the position if our organised fleets were away. But I am ready to take the hypothesis even at a lower level than I have put it; because, when this subject was first examined by the Defence Committee, the new Admiralty plan was not in operation, and the reserve squadron ships, though they existed, could not be counted on at that time for rapid action and mobilisation—rapid action and mobilisation being action and mobilisation measured not in days but in hours. I have omitted from that enumeration submarine boats, on which, no doubt, expert opinion may differ, but which, I believe, are destined to be of great importance, if not in naval warfare generally, yet in that part of naval and military warfare which consists in an attempt to land soldiers in crowded seas upon a hostile coast.

I have now described the actual condition of Great Britain and Ireland at what seems to me its moment of greatest possible weakness, a moment of weakness which we did reach for a few days as regards the Army during the South African War, but which we have never reached, or nearly reached, I am glad to say, as regards the Navy. At all events, the problem, it will be noticed, is a precise problem. The question that we could put to our military advisers was a precise question, and it was this: Given that Great Britain was reduced to the position which I have described, what is the smallest number of men with which, as a forlorn hope, if you please, some foreign country would endeavour to invade our shores? Observe I say, "What is the smallest number of men?" That may seem a paradoxical way of putting the question, but it is really the true way. We are apt in comparing the defensive power or offensive power of Great Britain and her great military neighbours to compare the number of our soldiers with the number of theirs, and to say, "If they can get across the sea, how could we hope to resist the masters of these innumerable legions?" But, Sir, that is not the problem. The problem is how to get across the sea and land on this side; and inasmuch as that difficulty, which thinkers of all schools must admit—the extreme military school will admit it as well as the extreme blue-water school—inasmuch as that difficulty of getting men over increases in an automatic ratio with every new transport you require and every augmentation you make to the landing force, it becomes evident that the problem which a foreign general has to consider is not, "How many men would I like to have in England in order to conquer it?" but "With how few men can I attempt the conquest?" Very well, I have made that clear to the House. The answer which was given by Lord Roberts, and accepted by all the other military critics whom it was our duty to consult, was that he did not think it would be possible to make the attempt with less than 70,000 men; those men to be lightly equipped as regards artillery and as regards cavalry, because, of course, horses and guns are the things which most embarrass the officers responsible for transport, embarkation and disembarkation. Now, I make no pronouncement upon that figure of 70,000 men. I am not in a position to do so; but Lord Roberts was distinctly of opinion that even with 70,000 men to attempt to take London—which is, after all, what would have to be done if there was to be any serious impression or crushing effect produced—he was of opinion that that was in the nature of a forlorn hope. The Committee, therefore, will see that we have got one stage further in the argument; and the problem now is, is it possible, with the Fleet and with the military defences in the state I have described, is it possible to land 70,000 men on these shores?

Sir, may I be permitted to interrupt the argument in its most direct shape—but not to interrupt it with anything which is irrelevant—to point out here that in this way of stating the problem we avoid all the controversies raised by what are called the blue-water school, because we assume that there are home defences, and it is necessary that we should assume that there are home land defences. If this country can be conceived as being as helpless as, let us say, some island in the South Seas, where the inhabitants know not even the humblest arts of war, why, I suppose 5,000 men, if they could get on shore, if they could squeeze a way through the Navy, could march from end to end of the island, as white men have marched from end to end of Australia, unresisted by the blacks. But, of course, that is a state of things which does not exist, and cannot exist. Some people put a dilemma. Either the Navy can absolutely stop an invasion—if so, why do you ask anybody to learn the use of the rifle; or else the Navy cannot stop an invasion, and then you must have a force at home competent to deal with a foreign force. But those dilemmas are very misleading. And not only that, but they lead in this case to a completely false impression. The difficulty of invasion depends upon the men that have to be landed, the number of men that have to be landed depends chiefly on the difficulties they will find when they come to be landed, and therefore some home force is an essential part of the argument I am advancing, and, however little I may personally believe in the possibility of evading the British Fleet, I do not ask them to accept any conclusions on that point at all; I do not ask them to accept the doctrine of the blue-water school in any shape whatever; but I ask them to take the problem as I have given it, namely, an insignificant body of Regular troops here, and an unorganised body of persons with some knowledge of arms, while we suppose that the enemy will require at least 70,000 men in order to reach London.

If the House agree with the Committee they will assent to the view that we have stated the problem in a very concrete and very moderate shape, and yet a shape which, if answered satisfactorily from our point of view, will relieve everybody's mind. Having got so far let me observe that since the days to which I have alluded earlier, the old days of Nelson and Wellington, there have been great scientific changes which all, I think, make in favour of defence, and I particularly notice two of them. One is the use of steam and the other is the use of wireless telegraphy. When Napoleon was collecting his legions near Boulogne the British Fleet was, of course, watching him, but it was no doubt possible for the panic-monger of those days, if panic-monger there was, to say, "If the Fleet can reach the scene of action in time no doubt they will absolutely prevent any landing on these shores, but suppose a dead calm or head wind prevented the Fleet from coming up, how do you know Napoleon could not land a sufficient number of men to make resistance impossible?" I will not argue whether that could happen in those days or not, but it certainly cannot happen now. Steam makes for concentration, and concentration can be effected with infinite facility now by means of wireless telegraphy. It is not necessary now that our ships should be in port or near a land telegraph station, or should be kept in close touch with the shore; it is sufficient if the cruisers which I have described as always remaining in home waters should always keep within the range of wireless telegraphy in order to concentrate at any moment at the point of danger. But that is not the only change. There are two other changes introduced by the torpedo and the submarine which must qualify the extreme doctrine of the command of the sea which used to be held, and perhaps is sometimes still held, by the so-called blue-water school. The command of the sea at one time really meant the command of the sea, of the whole of the ocean right up to the shore, and superiority in battleships gave that command. But it does not give it now in the same full sense; and I do not believe that any British admiral, even though our Fleets rode unchallenged in every part of the world, would view with serenity the task of convoying and guarding during hours of disembarkation a huge fleet of transports on a coast infested by submarines and torpedo-boats, And let it be remembered, no strength in battleships has the slightest effect in diminishing the number of hostile torpedo craft and submarines. A battleship can drive another battleship from the sea, but it cannot drive a fast cruiser because a fast cruiser can always evade it. A strong and fast cruiser can drive a weak and slow cruiser from the sea; but neither cruisers nor battleships can drive from the sea, or from the coast, I ought to say, either submarines or torpedo destroyers which have a safe shelter in neighbouring harbours and can infest the coast altogether out of reach of the battleship, which is very likely to be much more afraid of them than they have reason to be of her. Those are great changes, and they are changes which nearly touch the particular problem on which I am asking the Committee to concentrate its attention—the problem whether it is possible, under the conditions named, to land 70,000 troops on the island.

To proceed now to the precise difficulties which an invader will have to deal with. He has first got to get transport for 70,000 men. I am obliged to suppose from what follows, whether I like it or not, that our enemy in this case is France, because, as the problem is one of invasion, I am bound to take as the potential invader the great nation which is nearest to us and from which invasion would be most easy. I need not tell the House that the last thing in the world I regard as possible is an invasion by France, but everybody will agree that in taking a concrete instance I am obliged, whether I like it or not, to take that country, friendly though it be. How is France going to get the transport for 70,000 men? If it is a matter of long and open preparation, then it is clear that we cannot suppose that our fleets have gone on this wild-goose chase. We must suppose, therefore, that it is a fairly rapid proceeding. On a particular day in last year it appears there were in French ports on the Channel and on the Atlantic, steamers of about 100,000 tons under the flag of the French. I do not quite see how, if the matter is to be a matter of surprise, the French Government could count on more than the ships they actually had in port at the time. But 100,000 tons is absolutely insufficient to carry 70,000 men. The calculation that the Admiralty favour is that for such a force you would require 250,000 tons. I am informed, however, that some experiments made by French authorities a year or two ago indicate that perhaps that estimate may be too high, and that it would be possible to carry out the operations with 210,000 tons. I do not know whether the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean differs from that calculation.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I only say the Turks send all their reinforcements on a very different scale.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the right hon. Baronet takes that view——

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I am not offering it as an argument; I do not differ from the argument.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am dealing with the information supplied to me by those whom I have cross-examined and who, I think, are well qualified to judge, and they think 210,000 tons is a low estimate of the amount of tonnage required. Whether that be right or whether that be wrong, it is plain that the steam tonnage in the Atlantic and Channel ports of France at any given moment is wholly insufficient to carry that number of men. I do not believe it would carry more than half. It is no small matter to collect those transports, even if they had them in some harbour. The nearest harbour available is Cherbourg, which is a very bad harbour in which to make such arrangements, because it is entirely exposed to view, and operations could not be carried on in secrecy. Brest would offer very much better facilities. Does the right hon. Gentleman agree with me?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Hear, hear!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then Brest is quite as far from any place where a landing is likely to be attempted, and every mile you add to the distance exposes this huge fleet of transports—if you have them—to the attacks of torpedo-boats, and that irrespective of the strength of the convoy. It would be quite impossible to carry out the operation of transporting 70,000 men from Brest, or even from Cherbourg, in daylight. Some hours of darkness there must be, in which protection would be almost or quite impossible against the species of attack to which they would then be exposed. Assume them to have reached our coast. I ought, perhaps, to say that by the time they reached our coasts the alarm would long since have been given to every ship between the Faroe Islands and Gibraltar, and every ship available, every cruiser, torpedo-boat, destroyer, every craft that could be made available for resisting invasion, would be concentrated at the point of danger; and when this huge convoy reached the point of danger, what is it to do? Disembarking 70,000 men on a coast like the coast between Portsmouth and Dover is not a very easy operation, and, above all, it is not a quick operation. I do not believe anybody will estimate the time it would take at less than forty-eight hours. My advisers say that is a most sanguine estimate. Forty-eight hours involves two nights. Then calm weather is required. The operation cannot be carried out or attempted except in calm weather. That is exactly the time at which, if torpedo-boats or submarines get their chance, they have that chance in the greatest perfection. How does anybody imagine that this fleet of inexpert transports, which could not be provided with nets, because nets cannot be improvised, as the ships have to be structurally devised so as to bear them—how is it possible that this helpless mass of transports could escape the attacks of these torpedo-boats and submarines, putting out of account everything that cruisers, battleships, or any other naval weapon at our disposal could accomplish? The thing is impossible. Conceive the position of the invading soldiers—the pick, no doubt, of the invader's Army. It is not as if they were fighting for glory on a stricken field. Packed in these transports, commanded not by men of the French Navy, but by ordinary merchant captains, not knowing when, or where, or how the attack would take effect, knowing only that if it did take effect it would mean the sudden hurling into infinity of a whole helpless regiment of soldiers — does anybody think that is an enterprise which would be undertaken by any sane person? I do not know whether we have the right to measure the courage of our opponents by our own, or their readiness to take responsibility by that of our own naval officers, but I am certain there is no admiral in the British Fleet, and there never has been an admiral in the British Fleet who would undertake a task such as I have supposed. If a French admiral were to have committed to him the expedition which I have endeavoured to draw in imagination, he could not protect the transports, he could not even protect his own ships, if they were obliged to lie there in positions perfectly well ascertained, absolutely known, within a few miles of torpedo stations of our own, two days and two nights. Why, it is not the transports alone that would suffer loss and destruction in that time. If the protecting fleet itself did not suffer some great calamity while they were lying helpless off this shore, naval authorities have very greatly over-rated the efficiency both of torpedo craft and the submarine.

The Committee will, perhaps, think I have gone into sufficient detail. I have missed out some details, but I think I have said enough to show that we have really endeavoured to put to ourselves the problem in a very concrete form. We have not gone into generalities about the command of the sea or the superiority of our Fleet, or this difficulty or that difficulty; we have endeavoured to picture to ourselves a clear issue which is very unfavourable to this country, and have shown at least to our satisfaction that on that hypothesis, unfavourable as it is, serious invasion of these islands is not an eventuality which we need seriously consider. I am not sure that I have made the matter as clear as it can be made, but I think, at all events, I have to-day put forward, in adequate outline, what I have endeavoured to embody in the Memoranda which will be available to any gentleman who follows in office.

I have now finished the first branch of the task which I set myself. I will be very quick over the second. The second dealt with our Colonies and what is called the problem of concentration. It seemed to us, with the changes in naval warfare, with the changes in the seat of sea power of other nations, a redistribution of both our Fleet and our Army was desirable; and we have gone upon the broad line that, as the British Fleet and as the British Army should be available for the defence of the British Empire in all parts of the world, our force should be as far as possible concentrated at the centre of the Empire, from which it could be distributed as each necessity arose to that part of the Empire which stood most in need of it. I have to acknowledge that this has rendered unnecessary expenditure which has been undertaken under a different view of our military needs. I mention that because it is a subject which has occupied the attention of the Member for the Forest of Dean. The most notable case is the case of St. Lucia. The general problem was considered by a Commission, of which Lord Carnarvon was the head, and it was in deference to Lord Carnarvon's recommendation that St. Lucia was made a great naval base. One of the reasons for making it a great naval base was that it was not further than eighty miles from the French naval stations in those seas. What was a reason for having such a base at St. Lucia in Lord Carnavon's time is a reason for not having it there at the present time. We have to take into account the theory of torpedo-boats. It is a distinct disadvantage for any harbour required as a place of repair, refitting, and refreshment that it should be within easy reach of a hostile or potentially hostile Power. There is more in the abandonment of St. Lucia than that. The Defence Committee, who have considered the matter with the advice of the Admiralty and War Office, do not think St. Lucia is likely to be the scene of any great naval operations. It is not a place which we think could be with advantage used, or is likely to be required to be used for our purposes; and with the modern battleship there are strong reasons for thinking that, in so far as we required any place of coaling and refitment in those seas, both Jamaica and Trinidad would be better. The harbour of St. Lucia, though sheltered, is not very convenient, and does not hold a large fleet. These are the reasons why St Lucia ceases to be regarded as a great naval station. This is all in obedience to a trend of opinion which Lord Carnarvon's Commission were strongly in favour of—namely, that we should cease to scatter our forces in small isolated bodies throughout the world, and that we should concentrate them in important tactical units, have them under our hand, and be able to use them in places where they would be most likely to control the hostile forces of any enemy we are likely to have to deal with.

I pass from that, which is comparatively a small matter, and address myself to the question of India. The invasion of India has been the dream of many military dreamers in the past, and the bugbear of successive Governments in this country. Napoleon certainly thought it could be accomplished, and I believe he thought it could be accomplished even after his abortive expedition to Egypt. The Emperor Paul had a plan for accomplishing it; and there is no doubt the development of Russia towards India has caused great alarm from time to time in this country; and we have endeavoured, quite in vain, by diplomatic arrangement to prevent that expansion, which I will neither justify nor criticise, but which we have to take as an accomplished fact, and accept, whether we like it or do not. I think the anxieties of our predecessors were in one sense most unreasonable, and in another sense had real foundation in truth and fact. They were unreasonable because the idea of invading India from the Caspian, or any place close to it, in the absence of railways and means of transport for any large force is, I believe, totally illusory; and therefore, much of these previous terrors were, I think, ill-founded.

But it is true, and unfortunately it remains true, that the steady progress of Russia towards the borders of Afghanistan, and still more the construction of railways abutting or closely adjoining the Afghan frontier, which we can only regard as strategic railways, place the whole military situation in the East on a totally different footing, and we have in all seriousness to consider what can and cannot be done by our great military neighbour in the Middle East. Here, again, I may say, although the invasion of India is a topic much debated among Russian officers, it is not, I believe, any part of the scheme of the Russian Government. As I said in the case of France, this is a matter which we have indeed to consider, and which is of pressing importance, and may become of still greater importance; but I am talking now of the general problem. I am not intending to lead the House to suppose that I shall come down to them next week, or next month, and say a war with Russia on the North-Eastern Frontier is either possible or probable. The real new features in the case are these two lines of railway which I have mentioned; but I think possibly an exaggerated importance might be attached to them, important as they are, by those who read too hastily the lessons of the war now going on in Manchuria. In Manchuria there is but a single line of railway, and it might seem as if on that the Russians have been enabled to feed and supply at the front an enormous body of men. I do not know that we have authentic information as to the exact numbers, but they certainly are very large; and it might be supposed that, with two lines of railway, something like double that effort could be made on the frontier of Afghanistan. I need not tell the House that is not the case. The Manchurian Railway is a railway which goes through, and has always gone through, to the front of the Russian position wherever that may be. They have always been able to bring up on that railway men to the extreme position they wish to occupy. In Afghanistan the railways have yet to be made.

One of the most important considerations in connection with the problem forced upon our attention is that these railways, if they ever have to be made, must not be made in time of peace. The House is well aware that the invasion of India can only take place, speaking very broadly, through the two lines of Kabul on the North, and Kandahar on the South. There are, of course, other lines which have to be considered. Small bodies might penetrate north of Kabul through the almost impenetrable mountains which lie at that end of the Hindu Kush, and it is conceivable that another force might even come through Baluchistan; but I do not mean to complicate the problem unnecessarily, and perhaps the House will permit me to assume, for the sake of the exposition of the general situation, what I think nobody will deny, that the two main lines of advance must be through either Kandahar or Kabul, or both.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Through Kandahar.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. friend's opinion is a very natural one, but I am not absolutely sure it is correct, and I will tell the House why. It is much easier to make a railway, no doubt, from the Kush Post, which is the nearest place on the Russian line of railway, through Herat to Kandahar than to make it upon the northern line, where the railway will meet almost insuperable difficulties. But supposing a British force repulsed at Kandahar, and defeated at Quetta, and an advance successfully made along that route which my hon. friend thinks the best, I must remind him that, after having surmounted these great military difficulties, the invading army would find itself in a most unfortunate position for a further attack upon India. It would find itself upon the right bank of the Indus, in a desert country—in a very sparsely-populated country—with Karachi at the South always open to us, with the power of bringing troops down from the North and from the more thickly-populated parts of India. It could not advance due east because it would meet with the great Sind desert; and I am not at all sure any invader in the future would not follow the example of his predecessors in the past, and prefer leaving the immense difficulties of the Kabul route for the apparently easier ground which would be traversed by an army approaching from Kandahar and Quetta. At all events, it must be one of the two; and it is to be remembered, with regard to the northern route, if we are to assume, as I think we must, that no invasion in force is possible without the assistance of railway transport, that making a railway through the plain of Afghanistan up to Kabul is a most tremendous operation, and that there are no less than 200 miles of mountain where rock-cutting and other immensely difficult and laborious processes would have to be undertaken by the invading army. I may observe that the Afghans are not likely to welcome these railway makers in their fastnesses. I quite agree that the Ameer would probably find it quite impossible to resist in detail the attacks of the disciplined forces of Russia; but they would become very formidable opponents indeed when the approach was made to their mountain fastnesses and when they obtained, as they certainly would obtain, the assistance of the British in preserving their independence.

I have assumed, perhaps without sufficient argument, that railways are a necessity in dealing with India on a large scale; but I will mention one concrete fact which I think proves it conclusively. Lord Roberts informed the Defence Committee that during the eight or nine months in which he occupied Kabul in 1879–80 he had the utmost difficulty in feeding 12,000 British troops. Whereas Manchuria is a country rich in foodstuffs, and, above all, rich in transport, Afghanistan is poor both in foodstuffs and transport. It is, therefore, quite inconceivable that any large bodies of men should come into collision at any early stage of a war between the two countries. In fact, the problem I am now discussing of Indian defence is precisely the converse of the problem of British defence. An attack on these islands, impossible as I think it, is only conceivable if it is something in the nature of a surprise and rush. No surprise and no rush is possible in the case of India. The problem of Indian defence is difficult enough, but India cannot be taken by assault; and that is the cardinal fact which the House I do not suppose is disposed to forget, but certainly ought not to be allowed to forget. We may assume, therefore, I think justly, that the problem of war with Russia on our North-West Frontier is a problem of transport and supply more than of anything else.

It follows from that as an inevitable consequence that in trying to estimate at what period of a war between the two countries there could be a collision of magnitude between their main forces the main point to consider is the rapidity of railway construction. Now, I do not pretend that this question of railway construction has been much debated by Lord Kitchener, the Indian Government, and ourselves. I mean the rapidity of construction that might be expected in view of the difficulties that lie in the way of the railway makers on both sides of the frontier, and therefore I have no conclusion to offer to the House on this question. I am sorry that is so, because, after all, it finally rests upon that—not, perhaps, the number of men which would be required, but the rapidity with which they would be required. The speed with which they would be turned out does depend upon that, and on that I cannot offer on behalf of the Imperial Defence Committee any settled definite conclusion. It is an unfortunate thing that we have in the case of India necessarily to discuss these difficult questions by correspondence, which carries with it delay on both sides. I cannot help feeling that if we had Lord Kitchener on this side of the water for a fortnight we could do more to settle all outstanding problems, as far as they can be settled in this way, than we can do in a corresponding number of months when we have to carry on our communications by letter. But, though I should not be justified in giving the exact time in which, in the opinion of the Imperial Defence Committee, the reinforcements would be required in India, Lord Kitchener's view is that in addition to drafts there should be available in the relatively early stages of the war, which if it is to be conclusive must be certainly a very long one, eight divisions of infantry and other corresponding arms. I have not the least doubt that Lord Kitchener's demands are not too great. But what I am not sure of is the exact time in which they would be required. That is the doubtful point. But even in the extremist view it is quite impossible for me to believe that more than that could be required in the first year of the war. I think the House may take it as a most safe estimate that not more than that would be required during the first year of hostilities with Russia. That, broadly speaking, is the exact condition of the question as it now stands between us and the Indian Government so far as the reinforcements from this country are concerned.

The only moral I would draw outside the strictly military moral I have just pointed is that, if we are to sleep in peace over the Indian problem, it can only be on condition that we maintain undiminished the existing difficulties which a hostile force would have to meet. As transport is the great difficulty of an invading army, we must not allow anything to be done which would facilitate transport. It ought, in my opinion, to be considered as an act of direct aggression upon this country that any attempt should be made to build a railway in connection with the Russian strategic railways within the territory of Afghanistan. I have not the smallest ground for believing that the Russian Government intend now, or, I hope, at any time, to make such a railway. But I say that if the attempt were made, remote as it might at first seem from our interests, I think it would be the heaviest blow directed at the very heart of our Indian Empire that we could conceive. If this country is prepared resolutely to say that railways in Afghanistan may indeed be made, but they shall only be made in time of war and not in time of peace, then I think it is not at all beyond the military power of this country, without any fundamental reorganisation of its forces, such as would be implied in conscription, or any similar device, to make absolutely secure our Eastern possessions, as I hope we can make secure not only the shores of these two islands, but all the Colonies which depend upon us. If, however, by laxity, by blindness, by cowardice, we permit the slow absorption of the Afghan kingdom in the way that we have necessarily permitted the absorption of the various Khanates in Central Asia, if Russian strategic railways are allowed to creep closer and closer to the frontier which we are bound to defend, then this country will inevitably pay for its supineness by having to keep on foot a much larger Army than anything which any of us can contemplate with equanimity. Foresight and courage will obviate these dangers. Without foresight and without courage they may come upon us; and if they do come upon us, we shall be throwing upon our children, if not upon ourselves, the greatest military problem that has probably ever confronted the Government of this country.

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

I most sincerely apologise to the Committee for the long time I have occupied in this statement. But I am not sure, looking back upon what I have said, so far as I can remember it, I could with advantage have cut down my remarks to any narrower limit. I have endeavoured to give an outline, not an account, of the work of the Defence Committee, or, at all events, some account of their work and their conclusions in those great and fundamental departments of national life which are concerned with the defence of the mother country, with the best use of our forces for the defence of our possessions oversea, and last, but not least, for the defence of that great dependency which only within the last few years can in any true military sense be said to have become conterminous with one of the great military monarchies of the world.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I desire at once to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, and with him the country, upon having been able to make the important statement which he has put before us of so reassuring a character. I do not think the latter part of the statement was quite in harmony with some of the speeches which the right hon. Gentleman himself has made on the subject of the defence of India within the last few years. But, at all events, as to what the right hon. Gentleman has said now we agree with him that the whole tendency of that deliverance to the House is to remove the great apprehension which has been aroused in this country as to the danger of an invasion of India, for which not only our present military organisation, but almost any conceivable military organisation, would be inadequate.

The right hon. Gentleman, speaking of the work of the Committee of Imperial Defence, said it was much misunderstood in some quarters. If that be true, it is because the operations were not properly understood. We understood certainly that the Committee of Imperial Defence had a supervising power over the military and naval Departments, but the right hon. Gentleman has repudiated that. We are now told that the Committee of Imperial Defence has nothing to do with the organisation of the Army; that the Prime Minister and the Cabinet are, of course, supreme in such matters, and that the Committee is only brought into play as a sort of Court of Appeal where the two Departments are involved; that their function is to hear the views of these Departments, to co-ordinate and to reconcile them, and finally to decide the question. I am considerably relieved of some constitutional qualms which I have had about the functions of the Committee by hearing that account of their work.

But I come to what is of far more importance—the question of the defence of these islands, the Colonies, and India. I recognise that the right hon. Gentleman, in dealing with the invasion of these islands, was in a difficulty as to two courses, for, while it was desirable and even necessary to give the House of Commons full information, yet the giving of that information might do some mischief. But I think his statement as to the impossibility of an invasion of these islands upon a large scale will have a greatly reassuring effect upon the country, and I trust it will have a very material effect also upon our military expenditure. At the same time, if I am to criticise—and I freely recognise that this is a subject in which to the utmost possibility of our power we ought to act together—I think the right hon. Gentleman's elaborate reference to the possibility of invasion by France was a little overdone. I admit that his statement would have lacked picturesqueness and the full satisfaction it gave to Members of the Committee if this had been omitted. At the same time, his elaborate exposition of what would happen in a certain eventuality, which eventuality is of all others the one we least desire, and we hope the French people, at all events, least desire—may, in evil hands, and especially if dealt with by evil pens, do harm to the relations between the two countries—though not the official relations—and the feelings, especially of the French people, towards us. I gladly say that I am sure the right hon. Gentleman had no such intention, and that the whole people of this country would share his desire. But we have seen day after day foolish speeches made, and quite recently, in regard to another country; and although the right hon. Gentleman made it plain enough that he was only doing what was absolutely necessary in taking some concrete instances of possible invasion, yet I hope attention will be directed to the fact that he was not contemplating the likelihood of any such invasion and had no such suspicion in his mind.

The right hon. Gentleman went back to the days of Drake and the remote past, when he traced the history—evidently with great interest and enjoyment, showing how completely at home he is in the subject—of naval power and military power, and he dealt with general considerations; but the one figure which he gave was the figure of 70,000 men, which would be the least number with which any one in their senses would think of invading this country, and he put that on the sole authority of Lord Roberts. Now Lord Roberts is a man for whom I have the highest admiration and esteem; at the same time that is just the sort of thing on which differences of opinion may arise, and I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman would have given us some wider estimate upon that point.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I mentioned Lord Roberts because the question was particularly put to him. The right hon. Gentleman will remember that there are other military members in the Defence Committee, and there is no difference of opinion, I believe, upon that point.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: But there has been in time past great difference of opinion among the highest military authorities upon that point. I am, however, merely noting the fact that he only quoted one authority. What has always seemed to me the proper policy in regard to the defence of this country is to see that our force is sufficient not only to overcome the smallest number who might in any circumstances be thrown upon our shores, but that there should be so much additional strength as will compel the foreign Power to contemplate sending a larger force than 70,000, and therefore put it out of the question that they should come at all. The way to prevent invasion is to have, within limits, overwhelming force, such as would compel the invader, if he is to come at all—I am going to put it in an Irish way—to come with such force that he will not come. The right hon. Gentleman, as I say, has, I believe, greatly pacified the alarms of this country with regard to our own shores.

I pass now to Afghanistan; and there again I think that he has taken a moderate, and many of us would think a reasonable, view of the question, not using words or arguments of panic, and recognising that there are limits not only to the power of this country, but to the necessities and dangers to which we are exposed. We have had a remarkable proof provided for us of the extraordinary difficulty of the invasion of India by a most interesting account in *The Times* some weeks ago of a journey by an Indian officer who accomplished the distance in a shorter time than ever before by way of Seistan across the desert to India. I think anyone who reads the account of the country through which that gallant officer passed will have a better appreciation than before of the immense difficulties that any large invading army would have in finding supplies. I need not go into the details; but the right hon. Gentleman said enough, so far as I am concerned, to satisfy me that he is not one of the alarmist school in regard to the North-Western Frontier.

The right hon. Gentleman, however, has, after all, not contributed, out of the wealth of his knowledge and argument, to the point we all wish to be informed about—What are the military necessities of the country? How many men do we require? Now there was a curious little episode, which the Committee may remember, in connection with the Royal Commission, presided over by the Duke of Norfolk, to inquire whether the Militia and Volunteers were adequate to the military necessities and defence of the country. They asked themselves—What are the military requirements of this force? They applied to the Admiralty and got no answer. They applied to the War Office, and after a long delay certain figures were given to them. There was a delay of a week or two, and then they were told that the figures supplied were not to be taken as authoritative, and they were further told that the matter was under the consideration of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Then they took heart of grace and wrote to the Committee of Imperial Defence. They were told the matter was still under consideration, and that it was impossible to give them any answer, and they never got an answer. I expected we should have the answer to-day. It is most necessary we should know what numbers are required for the military purposes of this country. What is the good of the Secretary of State for War telling us his views, which he has done with great force and fulness, with regard to the Regular Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers? We have never heard what the view of the Cabinet was, and we are invited to form our opinions, and to vote money and do all the other parts of our duty without having the fundamental notion of what the wisest and highest authority in the country declares should be the number of men required for the defence of the country and oversea obligations. Now, without any desire that the right hon. Gentleman should pin himself to any particular figure, still I think it would be satisfactory, if we are to think out this thing for ourselves at all, that we should know roughly how many men are required for the oversea and home obligations of the Empire. The statement made by the right hon. Gentleman will, I hope, lead to one good result, which will be a considerable reduction in military, and possibly in naval, expenditure; but whether that be so or not, in so far as he has pacified the minds of the timid, and perhaps checked and controlled the minds of those who are more adventurous and ambitious in their ideas, we are under obligations to him.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said he had listened, and the whole House had listened, with intense interest and the greatest admiration to the speech of his right hon. friend the Prime Minister, and he could not help feeling, when he thought of the debates which had taken place in this House during the last twenty years, that one of the great by-products of this Committee of Imperial Defence had been the conversion of the right hon. Gentleman himself, because the arguments he had used, and the grounds he had adopted as the basis of the new policy, had been contested by the right hon. Gentleman in this House for years. It was most interesting to hear the right hon. Gentleman's speech dealing with invasion, because the arguments used there were just those which he, in opposition to War Office theories, had used so often in respect to that very question. It was an enormous gain when they found a body set up, to judicially examine naval and military opinion, and to determine on principles of high policy; a body on which experts were to be heard and statesmen were to be the assessors and the judges. That was an enormous advantage, and the House and the country ought to feel indebted to the Government for having called into existence a body which had incidentally an educational function, and had already produced in the minds of Ministers an appreciation of the teachings of history.

There was considerable force in what the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had said with regard to numbers, but they would make a very great mistake if they supposed that, at the very commencement of its career the Committee of Imperial Defence could come to absolutely definite conclusions on matters of that kind. Of course it must come to that in the end; it must come to the point of actually fixing the numbers and nature of forces which the necessities of our position required for different purposes. All he wished to point out was that the numbers and nature of forces they had at present on the Estimates were the accidents of the spasmodic action of a Department and not determined by reference to any settled principle at all. They must go cautiously, and having fixed the broad principles of their policy as defined by the Prime Minister to-day, they had not to create but to adapt and to do away with the vast expenditure upon works and vast numbers of unorganised units which had been produced under a false impression of what was necessary for the defence of this kingdom. They could not sweep them out of existence at once, but must by degrees eliminate what was in excess of what they needed. Therefore he thought some persons misappreciated the magnitude and difficulty of the problem with which the Government were confronted in bringing about the change in their system and the arrangements necessary for the safety of this Empire in time of war. It appeared to him that the Committee of Imperial Defence was entirely fulfilling those functions for which its creation was advocated. They were now beginning to feel some hope that military policy, instead of being tossed from one side of the House to the other amid much talk without knowledge, would be carefully and scientifically determined upon facts, and that common-sense conclusions would be arrived at; that no matter who was in office there would be a settled policy of defence which both Parties might expect to see continued and developed.

While it was clear that one of the wisest and greatest steps had been taken that could be taken, he considered that those who were really earnest in the House and looked at this problem with a full sense of responsibility must get rid of past prejudices and be content to be guided by the principles now laid down by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had covered the ground so admirably and completely that it was neither necessary nor desirable to point out where he could have made his case even stronger than he had, for he had made it strong enough, and the great advantage of his speech to-day would be its educational effect on the minds of the House and the country. His right hon. friend had focussed this question in so perfect a manner, bringing it within the understanding of the meanest capacity in the country, and had thereby advanced in the true direction towards a common-sense understanding by the people.

He quite agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to St. Lucia, but with regard to that there was one point that he had not mentioned, namely, that the staying power of ships now was infinitely greater than it was in the days of the Carnarvon Commission, and obviously as the staying power of ships increased the necessity for numerous coaling stations all over the world decreased. Therefore St. Lucia, owing to the circumstances of its geographical position and the general effect of modern progress, had ceased to be essentially necessary as a naval base. The increase of speed as well as wireless telegraphy facilitated greatly the power of concentration, and vessels could now be concentrated within any given sea area in a far shorter time than they could in olden days. The whole muddle and mess into which the military policy of this country had got was caused by misappreciation of the effects likely to follow the introduction of steam. That was how it started, and that was where the country went wrong.

His right hon. friend had dispelled any illusion there was that the Committee of Defence was to be anything more than a consultative body, and had repudiated the notion that it was created for the purpose of interfering with Admiralty and War Office administration. He had made it perfectly clear that all the Committee was to do was to investigate problems of high policy. It was, however, questionable whether the influence of the Committee ought not to be exercised over the Admiralty with regard to such big questions as the sale of warships because they were not completely up-to-date, whilst they continued to subsidise merchant steamers which were older still and not fitted for war.

With regard to the question of the Auxiliary Forces in reserve, Minister after Minister at the War Office in dealing with this question had always seemed to proceed upon the assumption that such forces in reserve must be fit in all respects to go straight to the front immediately war broke out. This opened a large question of high policy. Their real first line for active service was certainly the Regular Army, and if they took the latest dispositions of the Regular Army they found at home 156,000, in the Colonies and Egypt 61,000, and in India 75,000. Regular forces amounting in all to 292,000 men. Some portion of those forces were garrison forces, but still Regular troops were effective and ready to take the field. There were, therefore, stationed out of India more than double the actual number in India. But they could not be so moved, unless relieved by forces in reserve. Surely, as a broad principle of high policy rather than as a Departmental matter, in dealing with Auxiliary Forces intended for use in war over-sea the object should be to train those forces sufficiently to take the place of the Regular troops at home and in the Colonies, in order that all Regular field troops might be released for active service while they themselves had time to complete their organisation and training so as to form an effective Reserve.

He rejoiced at having lived to hear an explicit statement from a Prime Minister upon principles of policy, giving clear and distinct reasons why those principles should be followed. Too much attention could not be paid to the delicate and difficult question of colonial co-operation for the defence of the Empire as a whole. That question would have to be dealt with, but it must not be unduly hurried. He believed that the Committee of Defence realised the magnitude and gravity of the question. The war in the East emphasised in a remarkable way the importance of the co-operation of all parts of the Empire for Imperial defence, and the more the fundamental lessons of that war were taken advantage of for the purpose of inviting the attention of our fellow-subjects across the seas to this question the better. It was not so much a question of a mere cash contribution by the Colonies—either naval, or military,—for the assistance of the mother country as of the general discharge of obligations to the Empire by the mother country and by all the British Dominions beyond the sea, according to their means and in pursuance of common objects. Looking at the present struggle in the East, one could not help recognising that the efforts now being made by Japan in self-defence could not have been made without long and steady preparation on definite principles and at great national sacrifice. When it was remembered that Japan's revenue before the war was only £28,000,000, and that her naval expenditure was £3,000,000 in the year before the war, while the Imperial revenue of this Empire was in the aggregate close upon £300,000,000, it could not be said that with an expenditure of £30,000,000 on the Navy our Empire had reason to complain of the burden. But the Empire, not these islands alone, should bear it. It was for the Committee of Defence seriously to consider, seeing the magnitude to which the requirements of war had grown, how long we could go on attempting to make adequate provision for the defence of the Empire on the resources of the United Kingdom alone. He was delighted, therefore, to hear the Prime Minister's view, that upon the somewhat unpretentious structure of the Committee of Defence there might grow up something worthy of, and necessary for, the Empire, namely, a great scheme of organised preparation for its defence. The Government which had inaugurated that beginning, and had thus far so wisely developed it, would live in history as having taken the greatest step towards the preservation of the interests of all parts of the Empire in war.

SIR CHARLES DILKE said the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite was so pleased by the adoption of a large portion of his views that he appeared in the unusual light of a thorough-going apologist for the speech of the Prime Minister.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: Not an apologist but a supporter.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that, at any rate, in his joy at the abandonment of the policy of the Military Works Bill as regarded naval bases, the hon. and gallant Gentleman had left out of sight what could not be forgotten, viz., the gigantic waste of money which had been going on right up to the present time. He welcomed most heartily the portion of the Prime Minister's speech dealing with India, though there were one or two criticisms of detail which he would make—not as criticising the right hon. Gentleman himself, but rather as supporting him against those who might be inclined to attack him—such, for instance, as the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Stepney. In the last debate on this subject, when he himself ventured to use the arguments and to ask the Questions which the Prime Minister had put forward to-day, the hon. and gallant Gentleman for Stepney instanced an invasion by the Seistan route, and overwhelmed him by arguments which could hardly be employed to-day without being employed against the Government.

As to the speech of the Prime Minister as a whole, why did not the right hon. Gentleman make it earlier, say before the first consideration of the Army or Navy Estimates.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR pointed out that the Vote for the Committee of Defence was included in the Civil Service Estimates.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that was a technicality which could have been easily got over. The statement might have been made on the Address or volunteered on any day. The question of Indian defence lay at the very root of the whole of the Estimates of the year, and the statement of the Prime Minister to-day had given him every satisfaction. All he would say was that if that statement had been made at the beginning of the session there would have been very different debates on the Army Estimates, and possibly on the Navy Estimates, from those which took place. The statement ought certainly to have been made before the important Votes dealing with the men and pay of the Army were taken. It was no use now until next year, and the statement made by the Prime Minister, reassuring as it was, had come somewhat late.

He was going to appear in the unusual, totally unexpected character of a defender of the right hon. Gentleman's views about India instead of an assailant or a critic. He had never held extreme views upon this question. The Prime Minister in his introductory remarks perhaps gave himself a little into the hands of the school of critics represented by the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney, who took an extreme view with regard to the invasion of India. Those views were almost predominantly represented in the Press, and the Prime Minister—playing into the hands of those who would now become his critics—when he spoke of the Russian strategic railways being two in number and distinctly strategic, almost led the House to believe that they were actually on the Afghan frontier. As a matter of fact there was only a single line of any Russian railway —the Murghab branch—which came within 180 miles as the crow flies off the Afghan frontier. As a humorist once remarked, the crow did not fly in Afghanistan, and the straight line was entirely imaginary. It was 200 miles by rail from the Afghan frontier to the junction of the two Russian railways of which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken, namely, from Merv to Kuskh. The Murghab branch was the only Russian line to the Afghan frontier. A new line—the Tashkent-Orenburg Railway—had been made which, eight years ago, they knew would be made, because all along they knew of its construction, and its completion had taken place when they anticipated that it would be completed. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had slightly played into the hands of those who would be his opponents by using language in regard to the construction of railways and interference with the Afghan frontier on the part of Russia, which seemed to imply that there was some new movement of which they had not heard. He used the phrase "the steady advance of Russia." During nineteen years the Afghan frontier had been secured by diplomatic arrangement, and it had not been interfered with. The pillars put up had not been interfered with, and there had been no advance; and they were not in possession of any facts which showed any intention of Russia committing the dangerous act which the construction of further railways would involve; and therefore he thought the language of the right hon. Gentleman was not quite so well chosen as it might have been to support the admirable character of his argument.

Might he be allowed to answer not the Prime Minister but those who might attack him? There was a conflict between declarations which had been made on behalf of the Government on previous occasions and those which had been made to-day. They did not need to dwell upon alarmist statements, and he welcomed what had been said by the Prime Minister. The whole question of reinforcements for India was affected by a question which touched the second of the Prime Minister's headings. The point he referred to was the possibility of convoying and sending out these troops in an emergency. There had been an extraordinary double change since the Defence Committee had been in existence. Some years ago the Prime Minister told them, speaking on behalf of the Army scheme of the present Secretary of State for India, that it might be necessary to send out three Army Corps at once. At the time he raised the question as to whether the Admiralty would undertake to convoy them, and the Prime Minister threw some doubt upon it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said that did not sound like an extract from his speech.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said if the right hon. Gentleman would refer back to his speech he would find that was so. He admitted very frankly that there was a doubt on the part of the Admiralty as to whether they ought to be called upon to convoy such a force to India. In consequence of this difficulty about convoying, those who took the alarmist view substituted the South African garrison for the reinforcement of India as against the garrison at home. They remembered the memorable debate on that subject in which different views were taken, and the South African view was thrown over, and they reverted to the idea that the Army Corps should be sent from home. This question of convoying troops from England as reinforcements at the beginning of a dangerous war affected the whole of what the right hon. Gentleman called concentration, and he should have to say a word or two upon that matter later on after he had disposed of the Indian case.

The hon. and gallant Member for Stepney's statement was alluded to by the Prime Minister when he spoke of the various routes by which some alarmist Gentlemen thought India could be invaded. The hon. and gallant Member opposite argued against him the other day when he put forward similar views to those which the Prime Minister had stated to-day, and he argued against him as to the possibility of a rapid invasion of India by the Seistan and Balkh routes. The Seistan route was put out of sight by all Russian authorities themselves and also by that eminent geographer Sir Thomas Holdich, who rejected the Seistan route mainly on account of its waterless nature, and he had also rejected the northern routes through Balkh, which alarmed certain people at the present time, and which were perhaps used by the Russian Government from time to time when they wished to scare this country. Sir Thomas Holdich further rejected every route which could be called direct, on account of the difficulty of the country and the fierce hostility of the tribes, and he pointed out that the only route by which a railway could be constructed and by which a formidable invasion could ever be made was the circuitous route by the Persian frontier, the Herat-Girishk-Kandahar route, a route of 360 miles, past our great station of Quetta and our double line of railway, a railway of a very different carrying power from that on which the Russians would be obliged to rely. No, the whole argument had been disposed of to-day, as he hoped, for ever. The Prime Minister had adopted a sensible and reasonable view as to what would be likely to be the attitude of the Afghans themselves in case the Russians tried forcibly to construct railways through Afghanistan, which was the view which every one of the four Russian authorities themselves had always taken. Some very interesting words exactly endorsing these views appeared in M. Lebedeff's book *Vers l'Inde* published in 1900, in which he says—

> "The subjection of Afghanistan is a difficult job: it will be a new edition of the conquest of the Caucasus, but under conditions exceedingly less favourable, as the English will furnish to the enemy instructors and improved arms."

That was the view of the Prime Minister as expressed to-day, and it seemed to him to be a sensible and reasonable view But the Prime Minister had so completely disposed of all the alarmist arguments on this subject, that he felt they would now have to stand there as his defenders and prevent India being used as a ground for maintaining in this country a force larger than that which they would otherwise be disposed to maintain. The Prime Minister had spoken of the possibility of having to send eight divisions to India. That was an Army on the scale to which they had been accustomed in the past. It was now twelve years since they were told that three Army Corps should be sent out.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that a total reconstruction of our Army system will be necessary, and I am afraid that we cannot look forward to any great reduction.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE** said what he spoke of was an Army on the scale to which they had hitherto been accustomed.

He would now leave the pleasant task of congratulating the Prime Minister on the Indian portion of his speech, with which he was in complete agreement, and he would deal with the second portion. That agreement was sufficient to make it unnecessary for him to go into extreme detail which might have been necessary had there been anything in doubt. The second part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech lent itself to a definite and detailed statement, and although it was no use merely regretting the money that had been wasted and thrown into the sea when a policy had been changed, yet he thought the House of Commons, as the body representing the taxpayer, ought to take note of the enormous waste that had been going on through clinging to a system which had now been abandoned. That led to the suggestion that there must have been a considerable margin of time during which these changes could have been gradually brought into existence. It could not suddenly become right to make sweeping changes, reversing the arguments addressed to the House as recently as two years ago, and reversing the policy which had led to the enormous expenditure that had been going on, and was going on up to the present time. He asked the Committee to remember how far the responsibility for all this expenditure had been on the present occupants of office. He believed that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet was created by Lord Rosebery at the end of his Administration in 1895. That was the first form of the Committee. Immediately the new Government came in it assumed its second form, and the Defence Committee of the Conservative Government, formed in 1895 under the presidency of the Duke of Devonshire, lasted for many years, and was composed of substantially the same Gentlemen as were in power now. It was constantly vouched to the House as the great co-ordinating authority, and as the body responsible for expenditure on an enormous scale on principles diametrically opposed to those now held. The third form of the Committee was that which was adopted when the Prime Minister acceded to his present office. The right hon. Gentleman came to this House and at once explained the new form of the Committee on March 5th, 1903. He explained, as he did now, that it was to survey the whole of the strategic needs of the Empire, and he went on to say that there had been differences of policy on the part of successive First Sea Lords and Commanders-in-Chief. But there had been differences of policy in successive Secretaries of State, and there had been differences of policy in the Defence Committee as a whole. There had been a complete change—black to white, A to B—which had involved the country in great cost.

The Committee had heard to-day the extent to which invasion at home was still believed in by the Defence Committee. Those who heard the account would see that it was confined within narrow limits. The bugbear was not terrifying; the bogey had become feeble indeed; and although there had been no reference to-day to the figure 5,000, named by the Secretary of State for War on the authority of the Defence Committee on three occasions, still this little invasion from Brest by ships which were to get here without being noticed was an invasion on that scale. But two years ago invasion was vouched for on the authority of the War Office as a thing against which we had to prepare ourselves at home. In the Memorandum laid before the Colonial Conference on behalf of the War Office invasion was put forward as a thing which was seriously possible. No doubt the grotesque differences in the opinions of the Admiralty and the War Office had produced the change which they now saw. The one had followed the other, but these changes of policy had undoubtedly led to great cost, which in one or two instances he should like to describe.

The fourth and present form of the Defence Committee had led to the change of the Estimates which was so welcome to the House generally last year, but in the welcome extended to this item there was a hope expressed in regard to co-ordination—to use a word which was rejected in the Irish policy, but which was accepted to-day in this matter. Co-ordination in the Irish debate was increased power of the bureaucracy, but he supposed that co-ordination in the naval and military sense had an altogether different definition. Co-ordination, at all events, was a blessed word; it played a part in regard to education, and now it was employed in connection with military affairs. The opinion was undoubtedly expressed on the Opposition Benches last year, and also in other parts of the House, that co-ordination ought to lead to some reduction in expenditure in either our military or naval Votes. It was firmly expected from the moment that the Government announced their naval view that the reduction would be under the military head, but instead of that the reduction had been on the Navy Estimates, and that had not been accompanied by a reduction of the Army Votes. That had been the amazing effect of the co-ordination looked forward to last year. Not only had the reduction in expenditure been upon the Navy rather than the Army, but there was a tendency to vouch that the Navy was stronger than it was, and to justify the further diminution on the Navy, which seemed more probable than a diminution on the Army at the present time. The facts which led the House to expect the contrary seemed likely to continue in future from the arguments which were being used. But in the Return for this year the Government were counting the Navy as consisting of fifty-three first-class battleships. They were counting into that list battleships which they had officially declared in the Return before the House as of small fighting value, and which were struck off the list of effective ships of war. His main point was that, by our sudden conversion, we had become aware of the fact that we had wasted enormous sums of money in the last few years.

Had any Member of the Committee calculated how much money had been wasted in the last nine and a-half years by the non-adoption in 1895, when virtually the present Government came into office, of the policy which had been adopted now? The Prime Minister and the Admiralty had answered that question in regard to the past. They had put it in the Memorandum, but he confessed that it read like an after-thought. It was said, "We are making a sweeping change, and we must have a thought-out argument to justify it." The fact that the squadrons were covering larger areas was a sound argument, so far as it went, but it did not cover the whole case. The facts were not suddenly new, and the change ought to have been gradual. His main argument was that the Government had broken the pledge that there should be, in consequence of the change of doctrine which had been adopted, a large reduction of military expenditure. The Secretary of State for War, in a book published when he was a private Member, protested against the demand made upon us for unconditional adherence to different and contradictory dogmas within the previous dozen years. But now we had had these changes within the last two years and we had been asked to adopt absolutely contradictory dogmas, with the result that there had been enormous waste. Let them take as a concrete instance the very large reduction that was taking place at the present time in our expenditure at Hong-Kong, where until quite recently an enormously increased expenditure was justified to the House in respect of transactions which were taking place in China. The northern station of Wei-hai-Wei had been abandoned. All these arguments had been pressed on the House in much detail, and now suddenly a reduction took place at Hong-Kong. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Well, there were formerly two battalions of infantry in the garrison. One of these had been taken away altogether, and the other had been reduced. That was a startling concrete instance which had not been explained. One set of arguments were addressed to the House in favour of increased expenditure, and shortly afterwards another policy prevailed. One could not help wondering whether reasons of economy had not entered into such matters—the desire to effect savings to meet increases of expenditure.

There were three Military Works Acts still running. He would show briefly by quotations from the speeches of Ministers the grounds on which these three Acts were passed. The present Secretary of State for India, in presenting the Bill of 1897, said on January 24th—

> "We have been obliged under urgent pressure from the Admiralty . . . . The opinions of our naval advisers."

Speaking on July 27th, 1899, in regard to the second Bill, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover said that "acting on naval advice" the Government made the proposals which were then brought forward. Referring on August 14th, 1901, to the third Bill now running the Postmaster-General said the War Office were "bound to accept the judgment of naval experts." The argument that naval opinion required these works was urged on each occasion, and great sums of money had been spent in consequence. Take Jamaica, Bermuda, St. Lucia, and Wei-hai-Wei, and see how much money had been spent on these works in addition to the money from the Votes. On Jamaica it was £32,000; on Bermuda £80,000; on St. Lucia £203,000, in addition to £70,000 secured from the colony; and on Wei-hai-Wei £53,000; or a total of £368,000. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the great strategical importance of Jamaica compared with St. Lucia; but from Military Works Loans only, in the last two years, there had been spent on St. Lucia £133,000. On March 27th this matter was raised in the House of Lords and Lord Lansdowne said "very large sums of money had been spent on St. Lucia." And on February 23rd a Minister, in answer to a Question in the House of Commons, used these words—

> "St. Lucia will be abandoned as a defended station, and the garrison withdrawn."

In the West Indies alone £1,500,000 sterling had been spent since the second form of the Defence Committee came into existence. Although, no doubt, there had been only a gradual adoption of the views which had led to the discontinuance of that expenditure, yet that expenditure ought to have been gradually rather than suddenly discontinued. Now, it was admitted that the expenditure of that money for some years past might have as well been thrown into the sea. The expenditure on the naval bases had been incurred under the Defence Committee since 1895, and most of it since 1897. When the Military Works Bill was before the House in 1899, the hon. Member in introducing it declared that—

> "The greater portion of the money (£3,000,000) would go to naval bases, coaling stations, etc."

Now, as to the *cadre* heresy, the change had not been frankly made, because it involved the view that at the beginning of a war—the most dangerous moment—the Fleets would have to be employed in guarding across the sea the men and machinery to these naval bases. He called that not a frank abandonment of the old conditions. How did the right hon. Gentleman think the Fleet would like to have to convoy these garrisons, dockyard men, and machinery in the event of the outbreak of a war? [An HON. MEMBER: And colliers.] Yes, and colliers.

On March 31st the First Lord of the Admiralty used these words—

> "We do not propose to use the dockyards at Halifax, Esquimalt, and Jamaica in time of peace. If war broke out we could at once send out the necessary men and machinery."

And on March 13th the Secretary to the Admiralty said that—

> "The establishments at Jamaica and Halifax would remain without men, and stores could be sent out when necessity arose."

He contended that that was a heresy; to convoy men and machinery across the sea at the most dangerous period of a war! That was a direct reversal of the naval doctrine that the Fleet should be kept free to discharge its primary duties. On June 21st, 1899, the hon. Member for Dover spoke of the "readiness of bases in advance being essential to the mobility of the fleet"; and the present Postmaster-General stated on August 14th, 1901, that that was "essential for the safety of the fleet." That doctrine of the mobility of the fleet had always been maintained and had not been withdrawn. Here, again, the desire for economy under some heads in order to meet increased expenditure on others might have had something to do with this change in policy. On March 13th the Secretary to the Admiralty said that the new policy had "increased the fighting efficiency of the Navy and had decreased the Estimates." But he went on to say that "the reduction for stores arose directly from the reduction of the bases." So that it was the reduction of the bases that had effected this economy. At all events the Government had not frankly accepted the new policy, and were now putting before the House the very dangerous policy of convoying garrisons and cargoes of machinery and stores at the outbreak of war.

His last argument as to the extent to which the Government had failed to carry out their policy, bore on the question of the garrison artillery. Their policy was to reduce the naval stations; to withdraw the garrisons; to depend much more than formerly on the Fleet; to keep the Regular Army in this country as a striking army, and to put the necessity of our fixed defence on the Militia and the Volunteers. Look at the inconsistency of the Government's attitude! During the debates on the Works Bills the House was constantly told that it was necessary to make a large increase in the garrison artillery. One would have supposed that the change of policy would have involved a reduction of the garrison artillery. In the Army General Annual Report "prepared by the Army Council," the Regular garrison artillery before 1899 was overstated by 16,000. But, taking the real figures, the Regular garrison artillery before the South African War had risen to 19,000. On October 1, 1903, they numbered 23,000; on October 1, 1904, 24,500; and taking the Militia garrison artillery at 13,500, the number at the present moment was 38,000. That number was altogether out of proportion to what it should be under the policy now announced by the right hon. Gentleman. The Prime Minister had given no excuse to the House for the suddenness of the change in policy which ought to have been foreseen years ago before the Government had incurred this enormous waste of expenditure. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Committee of Defence, Salaries, etc.), be reduced by £100."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said he did not know whether it was not rather ungrateful to say that he would have been glad if the Prime Minister had said one or two words more on the second subject touched upon, viz., the question of colonial defence. He should have been further glad if the right hon. Gentleman had been able, after laying down very fully and clearly the general *rationnel* of Imperial defence, to show the House the necessity for the increase or decrease of the Regular Army, and the distribution of the particular kind of forces required for the defence of this country. As to the question of the defence of India, the Prime Minister spoke of it as being, at the present moment, satisfactory, and one that did not demand any great change, although in a very short time that position might become unsatisfactory and might demand very serious consideration. Now, what would be the effect of a position of the latter kind? At present we had an Army fully equal to the difficulties in India, but in these days changes were rapid and there might be a demand for an increase in the Indian Army. That pointed to the necessity of our having a large Army Reserve, and also to our having, as well, a considerable number of men, a little trained if one liked, who could be converted into a citizen Army.

He wanted to say one word generally upon the new principles that had been described that day by the Prime Minister, because, of course, a full acceptance of all the general principles, which he might roughly call the blue-water school, made a vast change in the policy of this country. He thought he might be pardoned if he lagged behind in this matter both the Prime Minister and the Committee of Defence, and might be strengthened in believing that he took not too presumptuous a view when he recalled that a contrary opinion had been held by the very greatest military authorities. He remembered that only two or three years ago, when the present Secretary for India was introducing his scheme, he spoke of the subject in hand in a very different way. The right hon. Gentleman said you could not run the Empire on the "off chance." In the new principles which had been broadly laid down by the Prime Minister the question of the "off chance" had been, perhaps, to some extent forgotten. We had to look at these matters not only from the point of view of fine strategy as viewed by the Committee of Defence, but from the point of view of the ordinary man in the street. We had not only to consider them calmly as we did when there was no war in being or in prospect, but we had to consider the result on the nation when we were in a condition of disturbance or in a condition of war, and it might be that the principles which we could lay down rigidly for our Army in time of peace might be found a little more difficult to act upon in time of disturbance and in time of war. Governments could not always act upon high principles of strategy. That this was so could be proved by going back to the South African War, during which questions of strategy were often sacrificed to political exigencies. Take the policy of Dundee, the action in regard to which was condemned by all generals and strategists, but which was nevertheless adhered to in deference to the opinions of the people, who were not generals and not strategists, but who in time of war would insist that their will—ignorant as they might be on these matters—must prevail. Therefore he looked with some anxiety to the application of this doctrine. There had been no changes since the speech of three years ago which should induce him to make this change, except that event at Clacton-on-Sea which had made such a deep impression upon the Secretary for War.

It was impossible to say what we should do, or any other country would do, in case of invasion. It was clear that the prize involved by the invasion of this country was so tremendous that it would not matter to France or Germany if they lost 100,000, 200,000, or 300,000 men. The price of that kind which would have to be paid would be absolutely trivial to countries which could command so large a number of men. Allusions had been made as to the enhanced possibilities of invasion because of wireless telegraphy, the improvement of other appliances, and so on, but surely those considerations applied to the attacking force as well as to the defending force, and what could be used by one could be used by the others. Information of that sort would be very useful if one knew where it was. Apart, however, from the question whether invasion was or was not possible, how was the matter to be brought closer home to all the people of this country? The Prime Minister by a close argument sought to show that invasion was not possible, but he did not seem to have covered the whole of the possibilities. Let them take the hypothesis that when an attack was made the Regular Army was out of the country and the Channel Fleet was required in other than home waters; he was very much afraid that the country would not be thoroughly satisfied with proclamation or pronouncement of the Commissioners of Defence. He was very much afraid that the country would exercise the most tremendous pressure upon the Ministers of the day, and that that might possibly have the effect of preventing the Fleet leaving our shores, although it ought on strategical considerations to go. That would have the effect of preventing the Fleet from being used upon what might be the right strategy. It might therefore be that through the popular feeling of the country acting upon Ministers, they might not carry their conclusions to a logical or clear conclusion.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he wished to join in the expressions of satisfaction which had been heard on that side of the House, and on the other side also, in regard to the speech of the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had done much to reassure them, and his declarations had been in sharp contrast to a great deal which had been said during the last few years as to the necessity for increased expenditure, and as regarded the North-West Frontier of India his declarations had differed a great deal from some opinions which he had expressed before. On the subject of the possible invasion of this country he had only one remark to make. It was not altogether unimportant to observe that the practical conclusion drawn from history was that this country was not likely to be exposed to any foreign invasion, and it was confirmed by the fact that since the landing of William the Conqueror there had been no invasion of this country by a hostile force. That was to say that there never had been any invasion of this country which had not been invited by friends in this country. It was an obvious remark that the conditions had entirely changed. It was true that steam and other scientific discoveries had made a great difference; but they had made a great difference both ways. They had made differences in regard to defence as well as in regard to attack, and, therefore, he thought the general conclusion which should be drawn from history in regard to the invasion of this country against the will of its own people remained true of the future as of the past. The difficulty of invasion remained as great as ever, founded as it was partly upon geographical conditions and partly on the character of our people. Even the landing of William of Orange was done at the bidding of a large party in

England who received him with open arms. Therefore he had to congratulate the Prime Minister on arriving by his Committee of Defence at the same conclusion which students of history had come to when they had considered all that history had to say on the subject.

As to the North-West Frontier of India, the right hon. Gentleman had reassured them very much as regarded the views of the Government. He had dealt with appropriate weight, and not more than appropriate weight, upon the enormous physical difficulties which would prevent an advance of Russia through Afghanistan. In addition to the physical obstacles which would be interposed in the way of such an advance, there would be the opposition of the Afghans themselves to be encountered. No more warlike people existed in the whole world, and there was no race which was more disposed to resent the intrusion of any invaders, as we knew to our cost. The difficulty which would be encountered by an enemy advancing through the Afghan territory to the British outposts would be almost as great in traversing British territory as it was in Afghanistan itself. Their difficulties of transport over the 150 miles to our outposts would be enormous. Those who had long paid attention to this question would be reassured by the words which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken. He wished to know if they might take it that the conclusion arrived at by the Imperial Defence Committee betokened a reduction of Indian expenditure upon the defence of the North-West Frontier and upon the fortresses, which had been an enormous source of expenditure during the last twenty-five or thirty years. That expenditure had been very largely drawn from the resources of the people, and a good deal of it, he was afraid, had been wasted. He understood the Bolan Railway had now been abandoned as it was not regarded as being any longer needed for strategic purposes. But those who remembered the Russian scare in 1885 would remember that enormous sums of money were spent on new railway construction both before and after that time, and particularly upon that line which traversed the Bolan Pass. One would like to know whether all that expenditure had come to an end, because it had been a very heavy drain upon India, and he was afraid a good deal of it had been wasted. If this heavy drain for military expenditure could be stopped a great deal could be done for the internal development of India. He should like to emphasise the extreme importance of keeping taxation at the lowest point possible.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said the Committee had heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister a most interesting statement, and one which, on the whole, would be received with satisfaction by the House. But it had certainly illustrated in a special degree the danger of treating in the House those high questions of strategy which must be entertained and decided by such a body as the Committee of Defence, but which in their essence and more acute forms should be restricted, he thought, to that Committee alone. It was impossible to discuss frankly and freely in the House questions of strategy without very great danger of arousing susceptibilities that had better be left untouched. It was probably unavoidable that, in the right hon. Gentleman's statement, he should have had to take the concrete instance he did of a possible invasion of these islands by a specific Power and the possible invasion of India by another specific Power. At the same time it was calculated to give rise to some misapprehension, and he thought it was well that some Member of the House should emphasise the fact that the Prime Minister only took these as supposititious cases and that no further notice need be taken of the matter. It would not be, he knew, by the Governments of the two countries interested, and he hoped that would be the case also with regard to the Press of both countries concerned It would be most unfortunate if an impression got abroad that the Prime Minister or any Member of that House apprehended that we were in danger of an invasion of India by Russia or of these islands by France.

There was one passage in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which certainly was of very great concern; that was the passage in which he referred to railways in Afghanistan. The right hon. Gentleman said that railways in Afghanistan must not be made in time of peace, and that any attempt to build railways in Afghanistan would be looked upon as an act of aggression towards this country. As that phrase stood it applied not merely to the building of railways by Russia, but to the building of railways by the Afghans themselves. The right hon. Gentleman, however, made use of another phrase which he hoped put another complexion on the matter. The right hon. Gentleman said the Afghans would certainly obtain the assistance of the British in defending their independence. Therefore, what he understood the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with reference to railways in Afghanistan to mean was that there was supposed to be some risk of Russia putting pressure on Afghanistan to obtain concessions for making railways in that country by Russian capital and Russian hands, and that if that were pressed to such a point as to require further assistance towards resistance by Afghanistan such assistance would be given by Great Britain. If that was the right construction to put on the right hon. Gentleman's statements, he welcomed them. He hoped it was understood in India that the best way of defending the frontier was to leave the quick-set hedge of Afghanistan where it was, between us and Russia, and that, if we were to move at all in Afghanistan, it should be in the direction of assisting the Afghans when they wanted assistance, and of avoiding any interference on our part tending to anything like the conquest of that country.

He wholly agreed with the view of the Prime Minister that a serious invasion of these islands was impossible, or at any rate impracticable, though he did not entirely agree with the reasons which the right hon. Gentleman had given for that conclusion. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman placed too little reliance on the battleship and the cruiser, and tco much reliance on the submarine and the torpedo-boat destroyer. His own firm conviction was that belief in the submarine had been far too much exaggerated. He would not say that the submarine was useless, but it was extremely restricted in its uses, and he should be sorry indeed if the impression were to go abroad that it was no longer the battleship and the cruiser we were to rely upon for our naval defence, or that we were to put them practically aside in order to place our chief reliance on the submarine and the torpedo-boat destroyer.

He also agreed with the Prime Minister that an invasion of India was impracticable. During the right hon. Gentleman's speech he ventured to suggest to him that the Kandahar route was the one which had to be watched. That was the route which conquerors of India had followed in the past, and which would-be conquerors of India would have to follow in the future. But the main defence of India lay in the fact that we held, as he trusted we should, the command of the sea and the shores of the Persian Gulf, and it was from the sea by Kurachee that the relieving armies would come if it was necessary to reinforce the garrison of India. Here he came to what he thought was the most serious development of the debate. Since the existence of the Committee of Defence there had been a complete reversal not merely of our naval policy, but of the very conception upon which that policy was founded. Ever since we took Gibraltar the basis of our policy had been the obtaining of stations at useful strategic points in various parts of the world, and as the world became larger so our desire for coaling stations increased. The recent action of the Admiralty, which must have been taken with the concurrence and after the consideration of the Defence Committee, involved the abandonment of our naval bases almost all over the world with the exception of Gibraltar. The abandonment of Jamaica was a very serious matter, inasmuch as Jamaica was taking upon itself at the present time, in consequence of the proximate construction of a Panama canal, a far greater importance than it had ever before possessed. Let the Committee think, too, of our long Eastern line of communication. We had a station at Aden and another at Hong-Kong. The principal strategic point between those two stations was Trincomalee, which was one of the great strategic points of the whole world.

We had been at great expense in fortifying Trincomalee; it had the most perfect deep-water land-locked and defensible harbour in the world, but without a word of explanation it was now being disarmed and the buildings put into the hands of caretakers. It was no use saying that we had Colombo on the other side of Ceylon, for as Colombo was an extremely bad harbour, indefensible and undefended, and so open to the south-west monsoon that the small guns had to be taken away along the mole when the monsoon broke. He was not prepared to say that this policy was wrong, but it was such a fundamental reversal of the naval policy pursued by successive Boards of Admiralty for over two centuries that he was surprised no explanation or defence of it had been given.

Another great alteration in naval policy was represented by the getting rid of obsolete ships. He believed that course of action to be right, but the Committee ought to be told upon what grounds so serious a step had been taken. Parliament had a right to ask why at this moment, after successive Boards of Admiralty had been adding to the Fleet and keeping the old ships, a resolution had suddenly been arrived at that ships which we formerly thought to be useful were now considered wholly mischievous, and that it was better to have few ships of modern date than to have a large number more or less obsolete. It was all the more necessary that the principle upon which this step had been taken should be stated, because since the decision had been come to it had been claimed that some of the vessels held to be obsolete were not obsolete at all, but were useful for many purposes. He regretted, therefore, that no explanation of this change of policy had been given.

This question of the naval bases had its most strange example in the case of Rosyth. That base was decided upon and the land bought in 1903 after the Committee of Defence came into existence; therefore it must have been with the concurrence of that body. The intention must have been to make Rosyth a great naval base, as it would have been utterly indefensible to spend so large a sum of money if it had been intended to make it a mere coal hole. Why, then, the alteration?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): What alteration?

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The abandonment of Rosyth.

MR. PRETYMAN: Who said it was abandoned?

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the hon. Gentleman deny that Rosyth is being abandoned?

MR. PRETYMAN: I absolutely deny it. I do not know whence the hon. Gentleman derives his information. I have never said so.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was speaking not of what the hon. Gentleman had said, but of what was being done. He was dependent for his information upon the usual sources. If the hon. Gentleman declared that the gentlemen sent to Rosyth to prepare plans for a great base had not been taken away, and that the works were being proceeded with as originally intended, that would touch what he was saying.

MR. PRETYMAN: The work has been done exactly in accordance with the principle that was laid before this House on the introduction of the Naval Works Bill. In the first place, a staff was to be sent to Rosyth to prepare plans, and not to start constructing works. That staff has been sent there, and plans have been prepared; and, so far as these plans are concerned, there is no further necessity for the work to be continued. That the works arising out of those plans have been abandoned is a pure myth from beginning to end. It appears to be a habit in the newspapers in this country to follow the movements of certain individuals, and then to draw totally unwarranted deductions from them. This deduction is totally unwarranted. It will be the duty of the Admiralty, in due course, to lay before this House proposals regarding Rosyth, and the suggestion that because certain individuals who have been preparing plans there have finished their work and left, therefore Rosyth has been abandoned, is absolutely without foundation.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he gathered from the hon. Gentleman's statement that Rosyth was still to be a great naval base, and that all the works necessary for that purpose were to be constructed in due course. If that were so, he seriously regretted it. He had hoped that the Committee of Defence had put a stopper on this most foolish and unstrategic expenditure of money on a place which was not so good as any one of our existing great naval bases. The coast of Europe from Ushant to the Elbe might be regarded almost as a straight line, with its centre at Calais, while the British coast line from Calais up to the Firth of Forth was not parallel with the coast of Europe, as so many people seemed to imagine, but at a right angle to it. That being so, it would be seen that the nearest point and the most advantageous position from which to act upon the coast of Europe was not Rosyth but Chatham, which was nearer to any coast against which we might have to operate, was just as near to any of the seas in which we might be concerned, and was far nearer our own other bases of Portsmouth and Plymouth. Consequently there was no strategic advantage in having another base in the position of Rosyth. The selection of Rosyth as a great naval base was, in fact, a grave strategic mistake, and he had strongly hoped that the Committee of Defence had recognised the fact and remedied the mistake. He was extremely sorry to hear that that was not the case, but that these most useless and unnecessary works, from a strategic point of view, were to be continued.

He had come down to the House expecting to hear something about the constitution of the Committee of Defence and its working, instead of which the Committee had had a most important and interesting strategic speech from the First Lord of the Treasury. He thought they were entitled to hear something more of the Committee of Defence than they had yet heard. In February, 1903, when the Committee was introduced, it was done in the shape of an abstract Resolution, and they were then told that it was a tentative proposal. The Prime Minister repeated that on August 2nd. 1904, when he said that the Committee was still tentative and embryonic. Had it now ceased to be tentative and embryonic, and had it taken such a form that they might reckon upon it as a permanent institution for deciding strategic questions? If he understood the Prime Minister aright, he was looking forward to the time when the Committee of Defence would include representatives from the Colonies. His own private opinion was that they had better keep their strategic Committee to themselves. Although it might be advisable to bring colonial representatives before the Committee of Defence they ought not to form part of the Committee, but should be called before it, as the Attorney-General was, simply to give advice, and should not form a part of the Committee itself. If they were to form part of the Committee of Defence, great difficulties would arise, for they would have to have representatives from each colony. But the Colonies differed in material and in strategic importance. The strategic importance of Australia, for instance, was very great, and the problems that would arise in regard to the defence of Australia would be of far greater import than the problems of defence in connection with other colonies and smaller places. How, then, could they have colonial representatives on the Committee on equal terms with equal powers?

The right hon. Gentleman had dwelt at great length upon the question of a possible invasion of these islands, and he had demonstrated clearly that it was impracticable. He had also dwelt upon the question of a forcible invasion of India, but he gave the go-by, perhaps for want of time, to the question of the defence of the Colonies. Now that was one of the most difficult of all the questions with which the Committee of Defence had to deal. He did not allude to the question of expense, although that was serious enough, but when they had to consider the defence of colonies such as the Cape, Australia, Hong-Kong, Canada, to the Western coast of North

America, they raised questions of the highest strategic importance. These were questions as to which he was sure they would have been glad to hear something.

He had not himself been entirely satisfied with the constitution of the Committee of Defence. Members should remember that it was formed in order to supplant the old Cabinet Committee of Defence. It now consisted of eight persons, four of whom were still Cabinet Ministers, two others were the Military Commander-in-Chief and the Naval First Sea Lord, and the remaining two were the heads of the Naval and Military Intelligence Departments. Therefore, they had a body composed of very unequally graded officers, and he conceived a great difficulty in getting, for example, the head of the Intelligence Department to stand up against his superior the First Lord of the Admiralty. Those inequalities ought to have been avoided in the constitution of this Committee. One point his right hon. friend had insisted on was that this Committee should not be executive in any respect, and that it was, and ought to be, only an advisory body. He thought that was quite right. But one essential advisory element was still lacking. He had always urged that on this Committee there ought to be an international lawyer to answer questions which he was sure the Prime Minister would agree constantly arose in discussing the practical questions involved in war. He also still thought the Committee should have a permanent secretary and archivist. It was all important that some element of permanence should be given to this Committee, because the four Cabinet Ministers were here to-day and gone to-morrow, and the other four officials on the Committee, at the most, only served an average of five years in their particular positions. Consequently, they had a changing body without a sufficient element of permanence. He agreed, however, that the present Committee of Defence was undoubtedly an improvement upon the old system of having merely a Cabinet Committee. That was simply a section of the Cabinet which advised itself. He understood that still further improvements were to be made, and certainly they had, on the whole, reason to congratulate themselves to-day upon the very serious and important conclusion the Defence Committee had arrived at with regard to the invasion of these islands and to the defence of India.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said he thought that a good deal of this debate had travelled on ground which had not much connection with the Committee of Defence. Various interesting topics had come before the Committee, but this new element in our Constitution had received rather less attention than it deserved. Speaking for himself he could not regard the various military and naval hypotheses discussed that afternoon as nearly so important or tangible as the real question before the Committee. The Committee of Defence had to deal with problems greater than any other Department, greater than those of the Army and Navy, and they required to be handled with the very highest naval, military, and civilian skill which could be brought together for that purpose. The Prime Minister, in his very interesting speech, raised a corner of the curtain and gave them some indication of the kind of work which the Committee of Defence was doing. He thought the most powerful criticism made on his speech came from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, who pointed out what the consequences of even two years of this sort of close examination might achieve. It was clear that in the past millions of money had been thrown into the sea, and still more millions had been expended on useless military works, and, if the kind of attention now being given by the Committee of Defence had been given to the matter in years gone by, the country would have been a good deal richer than it was at the present time.

He thought they were very much indebted to the Prime Minister for the consecutive sketch he gave of the work the Defence Committee had been doing. It was obvious that in the framing of that Committee the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to very great credit;

the idea which underlay his conception of it had been that they could not govern any more, in the vast problems to be dealt with, entirely by Departments. There must come in questions which were too big for any one Department and which must be handled by the Government as a whole and by the head of the Government. In order to handle them the Government must have expert assistance on a scale which it never could have in any mere Departmental inquiry. A further element at the bottom of the conclusion to which the right hon. Gentleman had come must have been the point of continuity. That was a very important point in this connection. If they were going to work out problems of naval and military strategy they must have available for future Ministers some record of the deliberations and the decisions come to. In other words, an element of continuity must run through Imperial policy, however great Party changes might be. It would have been better if we had had continuity in the past. Look at the enormous contrast between the position in which we stood to-day, and the position in which we did stand. In another place a Motion was going to be made for the printing of the famous letter of the Duke of Wellington as to the invasion of these islands. If they looked about they could find half-a-dozen declarations of the most eminent soldiers of the most alarmist character, and they might find an equal number of declarations of admirals from Lord Nelson downwards in a contrary direction. Up to now there had been no record of the systematic consideration of them, and no examination of them by anybody able to deal with them. It would be useful to know what the Defence Committee thought in 1905, in 1910, and in 1915. By having this record they would have something very much more reliable than anything open to them up to the present moment. On a Committee of this kind they could get expert assistance such as could not be got in any mere Departmental arrangement. One did not wish to mention individuals in this connection, but he might be allowed to say that Sir George Clarke was a valuable functionary in work of this kind, and he could bring to the work an amount of knowledge which would not be easy to find if he was bound by the traditions of the Department to which he belonged. In addition to the best naval and military talent, they got in the Defence Committee business talent, which, in his opinion, counted for a great deal. For that reason alone he thought the Committee would be a valuable one. He was not sure that it was an example that should stop with naval and military matters. A good deal could be said for a similar arrangement in the administration of the Colonial and Foreign Offices, and also in connection with questions which concerned our foreign relations and involved so much that they could not be relegated to one Department.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly right. That happens now.

*Mr. HALDANE said he knew it was so in regard to colonial defence. Take, for instance, for the sake of a concrete illustration, such a question as that of Alaska. That was a matter that concerned the affairs of the Dominion Government, and not only the Colonial Office or the Foreign Office. One would have thought that was a matter which a Committee with a wide survey—an Imperial Committee and not merely a British Committee—would be capable of handling with great force. It would be extremely interesting to learn from the Prime Minister that even the germ of such an idea had been attained. He did not think the matter stopped even with such things as these. He believed that right through the organisation of the Executive of this country there was room for co-ordination and for bringing out the power of expert assistance in a manner they would never have so long as they looked to the Department itself. He felt that the example of the Defence Committee was one which this Ministry or future Ministries might do well to follow up with the view to bringing the Executive of the country into considerably better condition than it was at present.

The question of Indian defence was a most thorny and difficult one, and he felt there was very much force in the remark of the Prime Minister that one fortnight of Lord Kitchener at home sitting with the Defence Committee was worth months of despatches. When they got to the supreme problem of the relation between the military and naval defence of this country they had a question which had been engaging the attention of successive Governments for a quarter of a century past. For the first time they had something like a chance of getting an intelligent view of the relations of these two branches of Imperial defence. If we had had these things before no one could doubt that we should have been enormously better off. We should have had an Army scheme by this time, and we should have had a saving of that money which had been thrown away by following out a ridiculous and antiquated policy. A Committee appointed in Lord Palmerston's time had given rise to a tradition under which more money had been thrown away on military works than had happened under almost any other head. They might have had something of a clear view as to what was to be the nature of the distribution of the naval forces of the country. They had got this great change in the nature of things that there was hardly a sphere in which this Committee of Defence was not important. He assented to the doctrine of the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean, that although they had had some interesting announcements in regard to Indian defence, which, if studied alone, would have justified all the trouble taken in starting that Committee, it was not until their work was done that they should know what they were going to open. For his own part he believed that they should owe much to that Committee, and that it would increase in importance.

He believed that in respect to the scientific organisation of Executive Government the example of that Committee could not be put into force too soon. Take, for instance, the subject of public health. New diseases were appearing; the very question of the air breathed by soldiers at the higher altitudes and by miners in the depths of the earth had to be investigated; and that was a subject which no Department was at present fit to deal with. What was wanted was expert Committees to deal with all that group of questions. His own belief was that they would not have the best standard of Executive Government unless some such bodies were constituted to which could be assigned all these subjects and which should work under the Prime Minister directly. Now, the Defence Committee was the first step in that direction—a step which might be followed in the future with great advantage. He regarded the debate they had had that day as one of the most interesting to which he had ever listened, and it gave an illustration of the working out of a new principle with which they would be very familiar before the country was much older.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said they had had from the Prime Minister a statement the importance of which it was impossible to over-estimate. They had heard a great deal in regard to the larger subjects with which the Committee of Defence had had to deal; but he would like, only in a spirit of inquiry, to know what the exact position of that Committee was, not only in time of peace, but in the very critical and anxious time that immediately preceded the outbreak of war. There was no subject more important to be considered when it was remembered that it was at the junction-point between the politician and the strategist that the most serious breakdown took place in the arrangements connected with the South African War.

The Defence Committee as now constituted was the outcome of a long series of demands made for, (1) a new co-ordination of political and military forces; (2) of military and naval forces, and (3) a new conception of the purposes for which our Army, Navy, Volunteers, and Militia existed. As to the relation between the political and military elements, the change was embodied in the creation of the new and reformed Defence Committee. That for the future would be the apex of our military organisation and the principal point of contact between strategists and politicians. It was at this junction-point in the military and political machinery that the old system broke down, and, while not wishing in any way to rake up past controversies, he did think it of the utmost importance that we should closely examine the new system by the light of past experience with the old, and, if possible, profit by that experience.

The history of what occurred during the summer of 1899 was highly instructive. Then, as now, there was in the first place a Defence Committee, but it met seldom and had no very clearly defined functions or responsiblity. It was, however, a purely advisory body and decided no point. Next they tried the Commander-in-Chief, who, at that time, was entrusted with the duty of preparing strategical schemes. The Intelligence Department was directly subordinate to him. There was then the Army Board which, allowing for the change made by the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief's office, and the substitution of a Chief of the General Staff, had a composition closely resembling that of the Army Council. The Minutes of the Army Board during the period up to September, 1899, made it clear that in the opinion of that Board the main difficulty was the refusal of sanction to the expenditure of £640,000 on preliminary preparations. The demands of the Board were disregarded until too late, and it might be said broadly that the opinion of every responsible military adviser was overruled in deference to political considerations. Everybody knew how costly this eventually proved to be, and how nearly it led to complete disaster. No lesson of the war seemed to him to be more important, and their time was not wasted by asking themselves how far the position of to-day was an improvement upon that of days gone by.

They had now, as before, the Committee of Defence, but it had been reorganised beyond recognition, and had had added to it a permanent military secretariat. Its functions were to—

> "Deal with questions of national defence, and to foresee Imperial requirements."

while the Army Council—

> "Freed from routine, will find the time and the means to direct military policy, to foresee military requirements, and to frame the measures of organisation, the neglect of which in time of peace entails disaster or ruinously expensive improvisation in war."

Major Evans Gordon.

Important as the controlling power of the Army Council was under this definition, it concerned only one of the services and was, therefore, necessarily subordinate to the co-ordinating head of all the Departments concerned in the conduct of, and in the preparations for, war. What he was afraid of was that between these two bodies, the Army Council necessarily more or less subordinate to the Committee of Defence, there might be, as there was before, a conflict of military opinion with regard to preparations, and, therefore, the shifting of responsibility from one body to another with the disastrous results that they knew occurred in 1899.

He would endeavour to forecast how this system and machinery would work in actual practice. Apparently, if a campaign were probable, the plans matured by the military general staff, under the supervision of its chief, would be presented to the Army Council, in order that the heads of the Departments might express their opinion and explain their requirements under the scheme. It did not follow that the plans would be adopted. If the strategical scheme proposed were accepted, it would come under the consideration of the Defence Committee, who would have the task of co-ordinating it with naval plans, and, possibly, of bringing it into accordance with the views of the India and Colonial Offices. At this stage it might be modified, held in abeyance, or rejected; and it might conceivably have to meet the competition of plans that had been independently devised by the professional advisers of the Defence Committee, who would probably prefer their own ideas and criticise others in a damaging way even if they did not oppose them. If the scheme of the military general staff were adopted, it would be remitted by the Defence Committee as an advisory committee to the Cabinet, and, if it had the cordial approval of the Secretary of State for War and the Prime Minister, it would doubtless be accepted by the Government, unless the financial objections of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were held to be insuperable. But in the course of these three processes there was so much opportunity for division of opinion and for the lapse of responsibility that it seemed doubtful whether the safeguard which a military general staff ought to supply to the nation would really be obtained. To make sure of that advantage, the best possible plan for a given contingency must not only have been thought out beforehand but it must be put into execution unfalteringly at the right time. To repeat what he had said before, the military organisation provided by the Committee of Three in their Report seemed to be almost above criticism, but there appeared to be no adequate security against a dangerous breakdown "at the old place—the junction-point of the military and political machinery." Personally he would have preferred to have seen the responsibility of strategical preparations thrown upon the general staff of the Army as in the case of the German general staff. He would far rather have seen fewer links in the chain—fewer opportunities for the evasion of responsibility. The Continental plan of organisation seemed to him preferable. In Germany the great general staff was alone responsible for the preparation of all strategical plans, and when the soldiers had to be called in there was one recognised authority who was looked to for advice. A multiplicity of advisers in the varying powers, influence, and authority, was, he thought, bad. Apart, however, from that criticism he did feel that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet had done, and was doing, enormously valuable work, and he rejoiced in its appointment.

With regard to the question of an advance on India, he was bound to confess that in the most important and weighty remarks made by the Prime Minister on the subject it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman was somewhat optimistic. He did not think the Prime Minister in what he said meant to go so far as some of the inferences drawn from his remarks in the course of the debate seemed to imply. The right hon. Member for Aberdeen had taken advantage of what the Prime Minister had said to express a hope that military expenditure in India would be immediately diminished, and that the taxation of the people would be reduced, and the hon. Member assumed that all danger in India was at an end. He was quite sure that the Prime Minister entertained no such view as that, and he should be very sorry to feel that any such inference could be drawn from his remarks. He thought this optimism was based upon certain misconceptions, one of which was that the Russian difficulties with regard to supplies were insuperable. That, again, was based upon the idea that Russian troops would require the same sort of elaborate supply and transport that our own troops required. It was nothing of the kind. In that country Russian troops would travel very lightly, and nothing approaching the supply and transport that we should require for the Indian Army would be required by such a force as they would use. Then, again, there was a misconception with regard to the Tash Kent line. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean seemed to imagine that that line was built as a strategic line, but its main purpose was to tap the inexhaustible wheat fields in Western Siberia. The almost insuperable difficulties in regard to supplies which formerly existed were now therefore at an end. This was one consideration which he was sure would enter into the calculations of Lord Kitchener.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said he contended that time was the essence of this thing. His whole point turned on the time.

*Major EVANS GORDON said that was a very important question, but he himself had never said anything about rapidity. He had always had regard to this danger, but if it came it must come slowly. The Khusk terminus of the Russian Railway was exactly the same distance from Herat as was the terminus of our railway from Kandahar. It was admitted that if Russia pushed forward Herat must fall into her hands, they would then push their railway on to Herat. What was this country under those circumstances going to do? If we were going to fight Russia he did not suppose we should sit down and wait for her to come down the Indus line, therefore we should have to advance to Kandahar. If we were going to let her take Herat and establish herself in

Afghanistan, and were going to wait for her to come down the Indus line, then goodbye to India. In his opinion that altered the situation enormously, and therefore he viewed any reduction in our Army with very great alarm. It was perfectly possible for such a situation to come about and if ever it did it would be necessary to have immense Reserves in this country to guard against the blow which might be aimed by Russia against the heart of India.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down could not have remembered what he himself had said in that House some time ago on this subject, when the sole ground for the then proposed increase of the Army was the defence of India, because he then pointed out that the invasion of India if it came at all must come slowly, and that there must be a reduction of the Army because it was impossible to keep up the expenditure on the Navy and Army too. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on that occasion argued that it was precisely because the Indian problem was pressing and urgent that we must continue with the Army Corps scheme which the hon. Member and some other Members on the Unionist side were then condemning on the ground that the number of men demanded by the scheme was far too great. The only reply they got to their criticisms was that it was necessary for the defence of India. The problem of India did not now appear to be so pressing and urgent as it was at that time. Were they now to assume that the whole situation was changed?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said he was afraid he saw no chance of diminishing the number of troops in the Indian Army.

Major SEELY said the result of that was that the reinforcement of the Indian Army was the real reason for keeping up the Reserves.

As to the Committee of Defence, he could not say a word against its formation as he was one of those who, with Lord Charles Beresford, urged that such a body should be constituted, but Members had reason to ask what the Committee had done since its establishment. The Prime Minister had laid down three propositions, viz., that invasion was impossible, that concentration was desirable, and that the Indian problem though dangerous was not pressing. Those propositions were all arguments in favour of reducing the Regular Army and increasing the Navy, and yet the Prime Minister, while laying down those propositions, had not said a word in justification of the fact that this year the Army Estimates were increased and the Navy Estimates reduced. They might listen to what the Prime Minister said, but it would be better to regard what he and his Government did. Personally he did not agree that there was no danger of invasion, but, if the view of the Government was correct, by so much the more was it necessary to decrease the expenditure on the Regular Army in order to have more to spend on the Navy. According to the right hon. Gentleman the country was to rely upon submarine boats, torpedo craft, and battleships, and yet the number of our ships was being decreased to an unparalled extent, both by the direct reduction of the Navy Votes and by the getting rid of obsolete vessels. In view of the statement made on behalf of the Committee of Defence, he strongly protested against the increase in the Army Estimates and the reduction in the Navy Estimates.

He was inclined to doubt the wisdom of accepting the decisions of the Committee of Defence as unimpeachable. In 1902 the Prime Minister declared that the great difficulty with such Committees was that the experts were always wrong. In the case of the South African War, the right hon. Gentleman said the military experts without exception were wrong. It now appeared that the Committee of Defence were going to rely upon the sailors. The right hon. Gentleman would hardly deny that most of the propositions he had that day laid down were furnished by his Admiralty advisers, and would not have been agreed to by his military advisers, at any rate a few months ago. But were the naval advisers generally right? Before their views were wholly accepted it would be well to look at their record. On every occasion, when the

Admiralty had been appealed to for advice, they had been utterly and helplessly wrong. When steam was first introduced into the navies of the world the Admiralty in a Memorandum declared that—

> "They felt it their bounden duty on national and professional grounds to discourage to the utmost of their ability the employment of steam vessels, as they considered the introduction of steam was calculated to strike a fatal blow at the naval supremacy of the Empire, and to accede to the request preferred would be simply to let in the thin edge of the wedge."

So bitterly was the introduction of steam into the Navy opposed by the Admiralty in 1834! Then, in regard to armoured ships, the Admiralty were unanimously of opinion that it would be most unwise to put armour on ships, and it was not until on two occasions it had been proved that unarmoured ships were absolutely at the mercy of armoured vessels that they altered their view. The Admiralty were equally wrong in their decisions with regard to breech loading guns, torpedo craft—both boats and destroyers, submarines, and cap shot. Possibly the result of their opposition was not so serious at the time in the matter of submarines, but in the other five instances, at any rate, this country was put in a state of naval inferiority through the refusal of the Admiralty to recognise modern inventions and discoveries. These were the men upon whom complete reliance was now to be placed, and the Committee was asked to adopt a principle which for a seventh time would leave the country absolutely defenceless if Ministers had their way. He hoped the Prime Minister would give some indication of what he really meant to do with the Regular Army.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

HAMMERSMITH, CITY, AND NORTH-EAST LONDON RAILWAY (BY ORDER).

SIR **EDWARD STRACHEY** (Somersetshire, S.) said he rose to move the Motion standing in his name. His ground for so doing was that this was a case in which the House might very well ask the Committee on Standing Orders to reconsider this matter on special and exceptional grounds. The only reason why he had taken up this question was that it was in the interest of the general public. He knew very little of the merits of the competing schemes and had no personal interest in the matter, and he moved the Motion merely as one of the ordinary public whose only anxiety was that the best possible scheme for a tube railway for this particular district should receive the assent of the House. So far as the history of this Bill was concerned he might say that in 1901 it was one of various schemes of tube railways which were referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses, and that Joint Committee reported favourably on it. In 1902 it was considered in another place and was passed by the Lords' Committee. It, however, failed to pass this House, not upon its merits but because at that time the co-partners in the scheme had sold the Hammersmith section of the undertaking to the Yerkes group, and immediately the line proposed in the Bill had ceased to be a through route. The Yerkes group withdrew the Hammersmith portion of the Bill, and therefore what remained of it was bound to fail. In 1903 the Bill was further postponed pending the Report of the Royal Commission which was then considering the whole question of London traffic, whilst in 1904 there was an intimation from the Board of Trade which influenced the promoters of the Bill and prevented them from coming to this House and making the usual deposit in the ordinary way to the Standing Orders Committee. The intimation of the Board of Trade emphasised a declaration made in 1903 that there was no prospect of any Bill succeeding until the Royal Commission reported on London traffic. Under these circumstances it was not unreasonable that the promot rs of the Bill should have said that they would not incur any unnecessary expenditure. They, therefore, did not pay their deposit, and when they came before the Standing Orders Committee they failed on that ground. There were four other memorials complaining of non-compliance with other Standing Orders, but those memorials were from promoters of competing schemes who were naturally only too ready to take advantage of the technicality of the non-payment of the deposit, because the promoters of the Bill would have paid the deposit if they had not been influenced in the way they had been.

The promoters of the Bill did not now propose to proceed with that part of the Bill which affected the Hammersmith route. They wished to limit their Bill strictly to that part of the railway which would compete with the North-East London Railway Bill which now awaited its Second Reading in this House. All the promoters of this Bill asked was that they should have their Bill read a second time at the same time as the North-East London Railway in order that the House, having both the Bills before them, might see which, in the interests of the public, was the best. It was quite impossible for both these railways to proceed because, through one part of the district which both would have to traverse, there was not room for more than one to go. As regarded the North-East London Railway Bill, that was considered by a Joint Committee of both Houses in 1901, and in 1902 it was thrown out by a Committee of the House of Lords on financial grounds. In 1903 a Committee of this House also threw it out, so that the only Bill which could now be considered, if the House refused to refer back this Bill to the Standing Orders Committee, was a Bill which had already been rejected by this House and the House of Lords. All that the promoters in this case wanted was to have their Bill put in the same position as the North-East London and that it should be under no disadvantage as against the North-East London Railways Bill. It was on that ground and that ground alone that he ventured to make this Motion. He begged to move.

Mr. JOSEPH HOWARD (Middlesex, Tottenham) rose to second the Motion. He said that he desired to do so entirely in the interests of his constituents. It was very important to the whole of North London that the line proposed by this Bill should be allowed to be made. It would give access to the City from Tottenham, and greatly benefit his constituents. This, no doubt, was an unusual Motion, but, nevertheless, he hoped, notwithstanding the decision of the Standing Orders Committee, that it might be allowed to proceed, subject, of course, to any conditions laid down by the Standing Orders Committee. He hoped, under those circumstances, that the Bill might be allowed to go before the Committee upstairs and the whole question be fairly dealt with.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Report of Select Committee on Standing Orders of March 7th last on the Hammersmith, City, and North-East London Railway (Petition for Bill), be referred back to the said Select Committee to consider and report whether the Standing Orders may now be dispensed with and the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill in respect of certain of the railways and works proposed to be authorised thereby, subject to such conditions as to the said Select Committee may seem meet." — (*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Jeffreys, Hampshire. N.) said that he hoped the House would not accede to the Motion, as the course suggested was one to be taken only in very exceptional cases, and so far as he could hear the hon. Gentleman had not made out an exceptional case. One very important Standing Order among the several that had not been complied with by the promoters was that which required a deposit of 5 per cent. The agents could not have made a mistake in that matter. It would be a slight on the Standing Orders Committee to send the Bill back. The only reason assigned for sending this Bill back to the Standing Orders Committee was that there was a competing Bill, but it was no reason why the promoters should not have complied with the Standing Orders.

Mr. HALSEY (Hertfordshire, Watford), as Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, expressed the hope that the Motion would not be acccepted. All the arguments in favour of it had been considered by the Standing Orders Committee. With the merits of the Bill that Committee had nothing to do. The Standing Orders were for the protection of the public; and the non-compliances reported in this case were many and serious, including neglect to make the necessary deposit. He never in his experience remembered a case in which that deposit had not been made. There might be a competing Bill, but that was not a matter for the Standing Orders Committee, but the Committee to which the Bill would be committed. In ordinary cases with which they had to deal the cases of non-compliance were technical cases, and the report of the Examiner of Standing Orders which was always before them took up half a sheet of paper. In this case, however, it occupied three full foolscap sheets of print. The question of not paying deposit was a very serious one and one which the House would do well to consider. He thought the House would see that that was a most serious and important point, because the deposit was the only safeguard the public had in the event of the Bill being thrown out and the Committee awarding costs.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: I do not ask that they should be exempted, but simply that they should be allowed to make the deposit now.

MR. HALSEY said the Committee certainly considered that it was their duty to reject the Bill. He hoped the House would not agree to this Motion. The general Question before the House was whether they were prepared to impose confidence in their Committees. The Standing Orders Committee was not unreasonable in its requirements. During the last three years 124 cases of non-compliance with the Standing Orders had been considered by it, and only in thirteen of these had it refused to dispense with the Standing Orders. That showed that the Committee was not unreasonably severe. For all these reasons he urged the House to support the Committee. The Committee had concluded that this was not a case in which they would be justified in dispensing with the Standing Orders. If the House disagreed with the course which the Committee had taken, the proper remedy would be to discharge the Committee and appoint other Members of the House who would act more in accordance with the wishes of the House. So long as the Committee did its duty in these matters he thought it would retain the confidence of the House. He therefore asked the House not to agree to this Motion.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said that this was an unprecedented Motion. It was in a different category from the Motion made by the Chairman of Ways and Means three weeks ago, for that was agreed to by the two parties, and even then it was only carried by a very small majority. He was one of those who thought that Committees were all the better for being carefully watched, and the Standing Orders Committee ought not to be free from having its conduct and actions criticised in this House. The precedent of the Motion made by the Chairman of Ways and Means, in view of the exceptional circumstances in which it was made, might very well be brushed aside, but the Motion now before them stood upon a very different footing. This was not an agreed case, and the hon. Baronet who introduced it had adopted the statement of the promoters. The Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee had stated that they had nothing to do with the merits of the case, and all they had to do was, on the Examiner's Report, to see whether the Standing Orders should be suspended. The failure to make a deposit was a serious thing in itself, but he held that promoters, when they came forward asking for powers as against individuals, could not be too careful and strict in the information which they gave to the public in complying with the Standing Orders. Parliament had to safeguard the rights of individuals in this way. In this case the plans were not what they should have been, and a great many cases of non-compliance with the Standing Orders were pointed out by the Examiner. Under these circumstances it was perfectly impossible for the Committee to recommend that the Standing Orders should be suspended. A Motion like this struck at the very root of the working of the Standing Orders, and it was utterly impossible for the House at large to come to a just decision upon the merits of a case like this. It was quite necessary that the House should take great care in appointing its Committees, but, after having done this, such Committees should be given pretty large powers, and the House should repose considerable confidence in them. If they carried this Motion they would open the door to all sorts of similar Motions in the future on the part of people who had committed such *laches* as were proved to have been committed in the present case. He appealed to hon. Members to reject this Motion.

* Mr. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I desire as a business man to ask the House to reject the hon. Baronet's Motion, because the House has, in its wisdom, delegated certain powers to the Committee on Standing Orders, and it is not business if, having done so, it now decides to override the decision of that Committee. I will not repeat the arguments of the Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders, or those of the hon. Member on the other side (Mr. Ellis), also a member of the Committee, as they have dealt fully with what passed when the Hammersmith and North-East London Bill was before the Committee on Standing Orders. To my mind the remarks of the two Members were most conclusive, and I beg the House to reject the Motion of the right hon. Baronet.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said he wished to draw attention to an important point, and that was the omission of the promoters in this case to pay the deposit. That point had been alluded to by his right hon. friend, but the real importance of it had not been brought before the House. The object of the deposit was to prevent people coming forward and getting powers, and then waiting to see what they could get by disposing of them to other persons. This was a very important thing in the interests of the public and in the interests of everybody concerned in this scheme.

Mr. John Ellis.

* Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton), in supporting the Motion, denied that it involved any lack of confidence in or respect for the Standing Orders Committee. Was any want of confidence intended when a few weeks back the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lowther), through the hon. Member for Hampshire, made a similar Motion? He too, intended no disrespect to the Standing Orders Committee, but he thought a great public injustice would be done unless these two schemes were considered together. They would also find precedents for this Motion in the case of several Irish Railway Bills. The hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham had intimated that this was a sort of wild-cat scheme.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY denied that he had said anything at all as to the merits of the scheme, for he never went into that question at all.

* Dr. SHIPMAN said the promoters had spent large sums of money in support of their scheme which had already been approved of, and to suggest they were unable to afford the deposit money was a very unfair way of putting it. They had held back the deposit because they were told officially in 1903 that no schemes would be considered in reference to tube railways until a certain Commission had made its Report, and they were told that until that Report was forthcoming it would be impossible for Parliament to consider these schemes. On November 4th, 1904, the Board of Trade also issued a notification through the Press informing all those about to promote tube railways not to bring forward their Bills. Consequently the Hammersmith Railway promoters, knowing that, held back on the ground that they did not want to pay a large deposit and then be told that they could not proceed with their Bill. When they found that the North-East London Railway had taken their name, and had come into the field ignoring the notification of the Board of Trade, thus trying to take from the Hammersmith Railway promoters the result of their labours, then they felt it was absolutely necessary to bring their case before the Standing Orders Committee. They also had a new ground to

put before the Committee in the fact that they were willing to modify their scheme and confine it to that portion which competed with the North-East London Railway's proposals. He therefore asked the House to follow the example which had been set by the Chairman of Committees and the hon. Member for Hampshire. Unless these two schemes were allowed to move together *pari passu* the public interest would not be served, and a great injustice would be done to the Hammersmith Railway Company.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 71; Noes, 133. (Division List No. 156.)

AYES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barlow, John Emmott
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Cameron, Robert
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Frank
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flynn, James Christopher
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John

Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harrington, Timothy
Higham, John Sharp
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Fadden, Edward
M‘Kean, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Doherty, William
O'Dowd, John

O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Pierpoint, Robert
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, H C. (North'mb. Tyneside
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Tillett, Louis John
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, Patrick (Meath, North)

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Edward Strachey and Mr. Joseph Howard.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cheetham, John Frederick
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C. R.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)

Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Crooks, William
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r H'mlets
Grant, Corrie.
Grenfell, William Henry
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords. N. W.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Horniman, Frederick John

Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Johnson, John
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kearley, Hudson E.
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut-. General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N. R.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Crae, George
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)

Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Shackleton, David James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thompson, Dr. E C (Monagh'n, N
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tully, Jasper
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon.
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Wrghtson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Halsey and Mr. Buchanan.

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £58,595, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1906, for the Salaries and other Expenses in the Department of His Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments, including Expenses in respect of Advances under The Light Railways Act, 1896."

MAJOR SEELY resumed his remarks in contention that it would be unwise to adopt the views of the Committee of Defence without further discussion. Certainly, with regard to the Admiralty, although they might have administered the Navy with great skill and discretion, they had been wholly lacking in that foresight as to future developments, which alone could induce the Committee to take action from which there could be no retreat. When questions were raised of Army and Navy policy on previous occasions, the Prime Minister informed them that was not the proper time to raise those matters; and they now asked for enlightenment as to what was really intended by the reduction of the Navy and the proposal to reduce the Volunteers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR indicated dissent.

MAJOR SEELY said that on March 11th, 1903, the Prime Minister did say that a Regular Army was required to reinforce the Indian Army at the early stage of a war. The right hon. Gentleman would find that statement in *Hansard*. Since they were now discussing the question as to whether this was the proper time to have a disclosure of the real intentions of the Government, he would tell the right hon. Gentleman what in point of fact he did say. In reply to a Question of his own the right hon. Gentleman said that it was not the proper time for the hon. Member to propound his views as to the proper duties of the country. Being asked when the time would be, the right hon. Gentleman said the rules provided a proper occasion. Surely now was the time, when the Committee were discussing the possibility of invasion, and the question whether we were to abolish or reduce our Auxiliary Forces on the ground that they were not enlisted for service on the Indian frontier, and that they would be of no use for that purpose. If this country could not be invaded they were of no use for any other purpose, and as a corollary the formation of a home-service Army was unnecessary. If the Prime Minister proposed to take any further part in the debate, he owed to the House an explanation why it was he was supporting the Secretary of State for War in taking the most serious steps of forming a short-service Army for home service except in time of war, and discouraging all voluntary effort in the defence of the Empire. As no one could foretell the circumstances which war might bring forth, it would surely be rashness or madness to discourage or refuse any offer of service in the defence of the Empire, no matter from whom or whence it came. This question was agitating the mind of the country. During the last few days he had received many letters showing that it was now impossible to recruit for the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers owing to the widespread belief that in consequence of the Committee of Defence having decided that invasion was impossible, and that the Auxiliary Forces were useless for service abroad, all effort in that direction would be in vain. The policy of the Committee of Defence seemed to be to discourage voluntary effort, and at the same time to heap scorn on the idea of conscription. In that way danger lay. Of course, it was a comfortable doctrine to many people. It was a doctrine which must appeal to those who thought that conscription was the only solution of the military problems of the Empire; for they recognised that the sapping of the patriotism of the country involved in the discouragement of voluntary effort must inevitably lead to the adoption of Continental military methods. He would recommend the Prime Minister to ponder upon his own words when he first proposed the Committee of Defence to the House. "You must not expect too much. War is much too full of surprises." That was a better attitude of mind than one of practically telling the people that they might safely relax their efforts to fit themselves for war. He had thought that they might welcome the Committee of National Defence. But he found that, after all, it was adopting the school of thought which meant less effort and less patriotism, and he for one would vote against that conclusion. For that reason he moved the reduction of the Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Committee of Defence, Salaries, etc.) be reduced by £100."—(*Major Seely.*)

*Mr. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said that while he agreed with one portion he disagreed with another portion of the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. He must say that he thought the hon. and gallant Gentleman was too hard on the Admiralty when he referred to the attitude assumed in 1835 when the introduction of steam into Her Majesty's ships was suggested. He agreed with the portion of the speech which deprecated any further reduction in our Navy or our Army, and he further agreed with the hon. and gallant Gentleman in the importance he attached to the Volunteers.

He was sure they were all pleased to have heard the very instructive speech of the Prime Minister. He had given them an enormous amount of most useful information with regard to our home defence and the defence of our Colonies and of India. The Prime Minister had lifted, he ventured to say, a load from the minds of many people in this country by assuring them, on the authority of the Committee of Defence, they need not now fear an invasion in force of this country. Not long ago the Secretary for War told the House that an invasion in force would mean conscription. That statement depressed the House and the country generally, but that depression had been lifted by the speech of the Prime Minister. They heard, however, that in case of war on the Indian frontier eight divisions, or 80,000 men in all, would be needed in the first year, and he wondered where the men could be got if we were to reduce the Army as suggested by many members of the Opposition. He would point out to the House also that if eight divisions would be required in Afghanistan the enemy would also be active in other places against this country, and a very much larger number of men would be needed to defend vulnerable parts of the Empire. In the war in South Africa they had to send against two small Republics no less than 445,000 men from this country and the Colonies. If 445,000 men were needed for that comparatively small war he asked the House what might be needed should we be at war with a great Power. He, therefore, sincerely hoped that the Committee of Defence would not reduce the Army by a single man. He agreed that by managing the Army on business lines a considerable sum might be saved, but it would be penny wise and pound foolish to attempt to save money by reducing the Army in time of peace, and then in war have to recruit men at very great cost. He held that the power of the Navy did not affect by one iota the necessity for an efficient Army. We had had a large number of naval wars and land wars, but he believed that in the future our wars would be on the land and not on the sea; for, depend upon it, foreign nations were quite alive to the fact that our strength was on the sea. He believed that they would endeavour to embroil us in the future, as in the past, on the land; and therefore we ought to have every available soldier possible to enable us to meet any emergency.

The Prime Minister had said that we need not any longer fear an invasion of this country in force; although he acknowleged that an attempt might be made to land 70,000 men. He himself did not believe that it was possible that that number of men could land here. Possibly, however, there might be a raid, and if the Volunteers were not considered sufficient to repel an invasion in force, surely they could be depended upon to repel a small raid. He believed the Government was mistaken in under-estimating the value of the Volunteers. It was implanted in the minds of the people of this country that when the Navy was otherwise occupied we might be invaded, and that the Volunteers were the force to repel that invasion. The Volunteers were a connecting link between the lower and the upper classes of this country, and they ought to be encouraged. Speaking as an employer of labour and representing employers of labour, he could say that they would rather see the Volunteers increased than the Regular Army increased; because if the Regular Army was increased that would at once withdraw from active employment the very best body of young men.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not in order to go into such details.

*MR. RENWICK said he would impress on the Government the necessity of reconsidering this question of the Volunteers, and he would like the Prime Minister to take the opportunity of saying, in the course of his reply on the debate, that it was not the intention of the Government to seriously curtail the Volunteers.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that anyone who had listened to the debate must have been fully satisfied that the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean had been amply justified. The statement of the Prime Minister indicated a complete severance from the traditions and policy of the past, and, if they were to agree as to the wisdom of the present policy, then they were right in censuring the policy of the past, and from that aspect alone the Amendment of his right hon. friend was fully justified.

There was one point on which he did not think anything had been said during the debate. That was the relation of the Prime Minister to the Committee of Defence. Under the Treasury Minute which was addressed to the First Lord of the Treasury under which the expenditure of this Committee was sanctioned, this Committee was treated not as a Committee of Imperial Defence, but as a Committee to consist of the Prime Minister and such other members as he might from time to time summon. He imagined that among the members which the Prime Minister would summon would be Ministers of War and Marine, but there was no obligation on him for doing so. He could not help thinking that that omission in the constitution of the Committee might prejudice the relations of the Ministers of War and Marine with the Prime Minister for the time being. That was a relation which could not, and ought not to be lost sight of if the functions of this Committee were to be considered.

In his very interesting speech the Prime Minister laid it down that there were three things to be considered by the Committee—colonial, Indian, and home defence; and he pointed out that the existing Committee was the successor of two preceding ones—the Joint Naval and Military Committee, and the first Committee of Defence. Now, he should like to quote what was the policy of those two previous Committees in relation to the defence of our colonial possessions, whether self-governing or Crown colonies—

> "The true policy of a great State having vast interests to protect all over the world is to assume naval supremacy as the basis of Imperial defence. This alone is the determining factor in shaping defensive policy."

But they laid down this further proportion—

> "that no supremacy can prevent isolated raids of hostile cruisers conveying small bodies of men."

The result of that policy was that they took most elaborate precautions and spent large sums of money in securing places essential to the Navy for coaling and refitting. The policy of the past had been departed from with a light heart. The Prime Minister said that afternoon that new conditions rendered old fortifications and old ships useless, and he pointed out that St. Lucia had been abandoned on the ground of its inconvenient situation as a naval port, and as too near a French torpedo station. The obvious reply to that was that St Lucia was not more inconvenient to-day than it was ten years ago, and therefore he could not seriously support a policy of that kind. He maintained that if the people of the West Indian Islands had been fully aware of the military policy of the Government, they would not have been so keen to accept the sugar policy of the Government. Surely that was not the real reason for the abandonment of the West Indian Islands. These islands were close to another great Power whose sentiments were not always quite friendly to us. The present happy relations with the United States made the force we had in times past maintained in those waters unnecessary to-day; but who could guarantee that a great naval battle would not be fought in the vicinity of the West Indian Islands, and, therefore, there should be a harbour there for the repair of vessels. The West Indian Islands had been from time immemorial the cockpit of naval warfare just as Belgium had been the cockpit of land warfare on the Continent, and it was unwise not to keep up a harbour in these islands for the repair of a British fleet.

The right hon. Gentleman had gone fully into the question of the invasion of England and had rebuked the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight for dealing with the Volunteers, a question which, he declared, was not suitable for debate at the present moment. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman on that point. A month ago the right hon. Gentleman said, in reference to some remarks of his hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Isle of Wight, that there had been a perfect misconception of the *rôle* to be played by the Volunteers in connection with home defence; and then he went on to say that he did not mean to go into that argument at the present time because a more appropriate opportunity would be afforded to consider it shortly. Therefore, the hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Wight was quite entitled to discuss the condition of the Volunteer force in relation to the possibility of an invasion of these islands.

In referring to the Indian policy of the Government, the Prime Minister told the House that we had failed to prevent Russian expansion in Asia by diplomatic means. That raised the question, on whom depended the diplomacy on which the Government had acted? If we had constantly thrown obstacles in the way, and thwarted Russian expansion in Europe, could it be wondered at that Russia had sought expansion by other means which had proved a source of difficulty to us. The Prime Minister had dealt at length with the question of the possible invasion of India through Afghanistan, and slightly on the question of a possible invasion through Beluchistan; but the right hon. Gentleman had not dwelt on what seemed to him to be a far more important approach to India, and that was by way of Persia. Now Russia had, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman, great influence in Persia; not so many years ago he spoke of what he was pleased to call the "identification" of Persia with Russia. There was a process of peaceful absorption going on. It seemed to him that Russia during the past five or six years had taken strong steps towards that process of "identification." Russia had made roads from her own frontiers through the heart of Persia; she had made large loans to Persia and had forbidden Persia to receive loans from any other country until 1912. She controlled the whole Persian trade by means of Belgian Custom-house officers; she had developed a railway system leading up to the Indian frontier; she had practically swallowed Northern Persia, and was in a position to swallow Southern Persia as well. He wanted to know whether the very definite warning or menace addressed by the Prime Minister to Russia with regard to Afghanistan would be repeated with respect to Persia, in which direction the danger to our Indian Empire was more to be apprehended. He did not himself believe that an attack on India would be made through the passes of Afghanistan, but that an approach would be made, perhaps, along the shores of the Persian Gulf, and between Beluchistan and Persia. If the conclusions and arguments of the Government were to be pushed to their legitimate conclusion he was not sure that they might not say to themselves, "Is there any reason for our maintaining a large standing Army in the future?"

There were other possible complications which had not been mentioned in the debate. He wondered how many people recollected that we had guaranteed the integrity and independence of half the smaller States in Europe—Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Portugal. In fact there was hardly a small country in Europe that did not depend for its existence on our guarantee. [AN HON. MEMBER: Jointly.] Yes, but what was the use of our joining in the guarantee? He would put this Question to hon. Gentlemen who overlooked this aspect of the subject: "Are we to forego our obligations to these countries, or are we to prepare military forces which will make our guarantee respected?" He himself thought that there should be a reduction of expenditure and of the number of men required in the Army; but he was sure of this, that while military expenditure depended on policy, policies other than our own were often guided by our expenditure and that of other countries.

COLONEL **SANDYS** (Lancashire, Bootle) said he was sure that they were all in agreement that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was one which had created a sense of satisfaction to a great many minds in this country with reference to the foreign policy of the Government. The Committee of Defence had stated that this country could not be invaded by a larger force than 70,000 men; but he confessed that that did not carry conviction to his mind. Invasion was very improbable as long as we were free from foreign complications; but in circumstances which might detain our Fleet at a distance from our shores, it was quite possible that an invasion could be made at different points. It was not necessary that 70,000 men should be landed at once. All that was necessary was that 10,000 men should be landed at a point in the North of Scotland, at another point on the east coast, and at a point on the coast of Wales, or at other places. These 10,000 men would only require to hold two or three square miles of country to enable 30,000 or 40,000 men to come on some days after. Our home military organisation should be directed to cope with that danger, and crush the 10,000 men before the additional 40,000 could be landed. He thought it right to say that the statement that we were free from invasion, as the Committee of Defence had laid it down, had to be accepted with caution.

As to colonial defence he did not propose to go into it, but with regard to the third great portion of the subject, the invasion of India, it was one on which he could speak with great confidence, having given considerable attention to it and having spent a considerable portion of his life on the North-West Frontier. He might say this, that the settled policy of Russia to invade India was held to be an accepted fact by every officer in India and also by every native. And it was the traditional policy of Russia, as laid down by Peter the Great, that the acquisition of India was necessary for the development of Russia. Russian policy was not a matter of Party policy, as it was with us, but it was a policy which was carried on unswervingly, and he had no doubt that if we could have access to the documents of the Russian *Chancellerie* we should find that the policy of Peter the Great was still carried on unswervingly by Russia. We might be hoodwinked by the specious promises of Russia, as we had frequently been, but he hoped we should not be so hoodwinked again, and that we should prepare for the inevitable. He shared the apprehensions entertained by the preceding speaker as to the advance of Russia through Persia. He believed that that would be the preliminary stage towards the invasion of India. He did not believe it would be necessary for Russia to bring her strategic railways absolutely to the frontier of Afghanistan. In Afghanistan itself railway engineering was a matter of very great difficulty, but if they could advance those railways within a moderate distance of the Afghan frontier there was a great quantity of camels in that country which could carry grain up, and they could trust to their army to reach Kabul. What we had to do now, as had been pointed out in the Prime Minister's speech, was to check the advance of Russia by a strategic railway towards our frontier as was done by them in Manchuria, the line of railway in question leading to a prolonged war which was going on at the present moment. If we once allowed them to get a footing on the Persian Gulf or to carry their railway projects to the frontier we should have to do in India what the Chinese had to do in Manchuria. Forewarned was forearmed. It had been the policy of this country to defer her preparations until the danger was at the door. We had had an object-lesson of that in the war in South Africa. We had another object-lesson in the way in which the Japanese prepared slowly and persistently before the misfortune of war came upon them, and when it did come they were ready. We never were really, but if we were not ready when Russia was ready to invade India we should lose India. He pressed upon the Government and the House generally the advisability of saying that, as we had become a Continental power in Asia, and had Continental responsibilities with regard to military defence—although our admirable Navy must be relied upon to a great extent, and yet not entirely for that defence—that in future it should be rested upon military action, and towards that end the action of the Committee of Defence was one upon which he congratulated the Prime Minister and the country.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the Committee will, perhaps, desire me to make a brief answer to some of the criticisms that have been passed upon what I have said this afternoon, and upon the general subject of the Vote. In the first place, with regard to the Vote, I dissent from the view which has been expressed with some emphasis by one or two Members opposite, that this is the proper occasion on which to discuss the Volunteers, the Army organisation, and other cognate subjects. It is impossible to deny that the Volunteers have a relation to national defence, or that the Regular Army, the Navy, diplomacy, and finance are all connected intimately with it. But the great object with which we arranged to put down this Vote, at the request originally, I think, of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, was not that we might afford a new opportunity for discussing the subjects I have just mentioned, but that we might deal, and deal only, with those subjects which, while relevant to the problem of national defence, were out of order on the Votes either of the Army, Navy, or diplomacy. So much for the limits to which, I venture to say, our debate should be confined.

I pass to the criticism which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean developed at some length with regard to our withdrawal from certain naval stations, a criticism which was partly based, I think, on naval and partly on financial considerations. Let me take first the naval considerations he alleged. I think his statement was in one important particular erroneous, though the error was a very natural one. He seems to think that one of the naval stations to which we attach less importance than our predecessors is Hong-Kong.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE denied that he made that specific statement; he said there was a reduction of the garrison at Hong-Kong which seemed inconsistent with the present state of things. That place had been rather heavily fortified, the garrison having been fixed in accordance with the numbers required for a defence which should free the Fleet, as the phrase went, but now that garrison had been reduced. Of course he knew that dockyard expenditure was going on there now.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not been able since the right hon. Gentleman spoke to consult the documents, but I believe—I am confident—he is wrong in supposing that any reduction has taken place in relation to the authorised defence of Hong-Kong. There was an additional battalion placed there at one time, not for the purpose of defending Hong-Kong, but in relation to the Chinese troubles. Those troubles are over, and that additional battalion has been withdrawn; but I am confident I am right in informing the right hon. Gentleman that the existing garrison is the garrison which has always been regarded as adequate for the defence of that place. Should any doubt remain on the question, if the right hon. Gentleman will kindly put down a Question on the Paper I will give him all the information he requires.

Now I come to the undisputed part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, that part relating to St. Lucia and the West Indies. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last but one and other speakers in this debate regretted that we had abandoned a place upon which much money had been spent, and which they thought would be still extremely useful as a base for naval operations. The money may have been ill-spent, but the fact that it was ill-spent does not make it better to say that you will keep a place which on strategic grounds you had better abandon. I do not think that the fact that money has been wasted is a reason for wasting more. The expenditure is now brought to an end. The reason why the expenditure was originally undertaken was in consequence of the Report of a very strong Commission—the Carnarvon Commission—whose general tendency was to concentrate our forces, and who carried on the old tradition that the West Indies were likely to be the centre of an important action between different Powers. The Report was based on the view that the West Indies were likely to be the scene of a great fleet action, and that decision seemed to us to be in the least degree probable. We thought that actions between the fleets of any European Powers were likely to take place in a theatre of war far to the east of the Caribbean Sea; and although some of the great naval battles of the world have been fought in those regions, I hope and believe that we shall never again be engaged in a great fleet action in the Caribbean Sea.

It has been made a matter of a reproach that all this was not thought of before, and that more caution was not shown in this expenditure. Let the Committee consider for a moment how this kind of criticism would tell upon any great change and any great reform either in naval or military or other matters. You could not get certitude in these matters even if you had to do with persons of infinite knowledge as regards the existing conditions. The conditions change, the dispersion of sea power throughout the world varies, the size of vessels varies, the weapons used by the vessels vary, tactical methods vary, and with these variations there inevitably occur the sort of variations that render useless the expenditure which at the time may have been fully justified. And, of course, that expenditure will be carried on, and ought to be carried on until it becomes quite clear that the new view is the correct one. To remain in a state of floating indecision, neither dealing with the old policy as if it were true nor making up your mind upon a new policy, cannot be wise and is not wise. A wise man would pursue the opposite course and say, "We saw that circumstances were changing and considered them, and, after having fully considered them, we see that some vital and fundamental alteration must be made in our strategic considerations." The part of the wise man is, in what I understand is a City phrase, "To cut your loss," to admit that the old conditions have changed and that you have been mistaken, and to redistribute the forces of the Empire as sound strategy and sound economy best dictate. Now, I am not prepared to deny that there was a mistake made in the case of St. Lucia. But it was not wholly a mistake. The conditions have greatly altered since the decision was originally come to.

The hon. Member for the Isle of Wight devoted a great deal of his time to an argument by which he seemed to indicate that the Defence Committee and their advisers were wrong because many Boards of Admiralty and many War Office Administrations have been wrong in the past. Of course they have been wrong. The naval and military history of this nation and of all nations is strewn with mistakes, and will continue to be strewn with mistakes. In questions so difficult and so changing it is impossible to get in every case a decision which wisdom after the event will ultimately show to be the right one. The members of the Defence Committee do not claim, either for themselves in their individual capacity or in their collective capacity, that they are endowed with any special wisdom. What is claimed for the Defence Committee is that it provides mechanism by which such wisdom as we can collect together may be brought to a convenient focus and worked not in antagonism but in harmony for the attainment of a common object. The hon. Member for King's Lynn mentioned a case which gives an apt illustration of these very changes in Admiralty opinion in the past which have been made the subject of comment—the case of Trincomalee. No doubt the Admiralty were at one time—again it was Lord Carnarvon's Commission—desirous that in addition to Colombo we should have a harbour at Trincomalee. As a matter of fact, the stores have not been kept there for a long time, for it has not shown itself to be of use for a convenient naval base. It was perfectly right that it should be abandoned and the Committee were right in endorsing that suggestion. On this question of costly error there is one other observation suggested to me by the interesting speech of the hon. and learned Member for Haddington. He spoke in laudatory terms of the Committee of Defence, and he looked forward to the period when the Committee of Defence, or other bodies constituted on the lines of it, should bring the scientific element into every Department of our Government, and he would desire to have something analogous to the Committee of Defence dealing with such matters as public health. Every one who will look through the history of medical opinion as regards public health during the last fifty years, and the amount of money spent in obedience to medical opinion, will find as great a crop of errors and as large an expenditure of public money which subsequent knowledge has shown to be ill-spent as anything connected with the Army and the Navy. It is regrettable but it is inevitable. As long as we are fallible, as long as the House of Commons is not entirely composed of men possessing Solomon's wisdom, so long shall we, acting on the best opinion we can obtain and which science can give, commit errors which the science of the next day will say have been of the grossest description.

There is one very curious moral which one or two speakers, but not the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, have drawn from what I have said. They seem to think that the sober and modest estimate which I gave of the dangers which we fear on the North-West Frontier of India were of such a character as to indicate, together with the views which the Committee held, that we might largely reduce the numbers of our Regular Army. I do not go into the question of the size of the Indian Army on this occasion, but I think that the right hon. Baronet put the point in a more accurate fashion. What he said was that my statement, with which he broadly agreed, was of a character which showed that no fundamental alteration could be made, by which I suppose he meant that compulsory service of some sort or another would be required in order to carry out our national obligations.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said that he referred to the speech of the Secretary for War on April 3rd and the comments of the Conservative Press, that vastly larger forces than those contemplated would have to be sent to India in a shorter time, say in the first year of a war.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not say anything of what might be anticipated in the first year of a war, but I am afraid that in the first year of a war it will be found by the Government responsible for meeting its needs that the enormous reductions which some hon. Gentlemen seem to anticipate will be quite impossible. I do not mean to develop that point; but I raise a note of warning, because I understand that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen drew from what I have said the inference that the first thing which ought to be done in consequence of the statement of the Committee of Defence was to begin to reduce the Regular Forces of the Crown. I do not think that the Indian problem is otherwise than a grave problem. Some hon. friends of mine seem to think I rather contemplated as a remote and impossible danger that we should be invaded by any neighbouring Power, and that if we were so invaded the difficulties of Afghanistan and the provisions necessary would make the military attempt an impossible and illusory one. That is not my view. And it is not the view of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean. On the contrary, I think a war which was really undertaken for the conquest of India by any foreign Power, though a war which in its inception and earlier stages would be a slow war—I mean that not in one or two or three months should we see the collision of great forces or even later—yet it would be a war that would impose a strain on all our resources, and would require a great force of Regular troops even in what may relatively be described as its earlier stages—relatively, that is, to the duration of the operations. I do not think that any one who really heard and weighed the speech which I delivered this afternoon could doubt that that was what I intended to convey.

With regard to Persia, I did not deal with Persia; but, of course, the question of Persia has engaged our most anxious attention, and necessarily will do so. But I do not think that it is so important a matter as those matters which I did discuss in connection with India. I do not think it probable that the main attack on India will be through Persia. I do not at all deny that subsidiary and collateral dangers might be apprehended upon the regions to the west and south of Afghanistan itself; and I indicated that in my speech. But I confined myself, and I think rightly confined myself, to the two lines of advance which all military critics are agreed are those which would be the principal lines along which dangerous invasion is likely to take place.

That is all I have to say in answer to the, for the most part, very kindly criticisms of my speech of this afternoon. But I have been reproached for not saying more about the constitution of the Committee of Defence itself.

Mr. HALDANE: The right hon. Gentleman promised to say something on the colonial question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is true and I will deal with it in connection with the constitution of the Committee. It may seem a paradox, but, after having given the matter the most careful consideration in my power, I have come to the conclusion that the only member of the Defence Committee who ought to have an indisputable right to be a member is the Prime Minister himself. It is perfectly true that as a matter of practice and in relation to almost all of the subjects that we have had under discussion there have been summoned to the meetings of the Committee, not as witnesses, but as members, the two members of the Cabinet responsible for the Army and the Navy respectively and their chief naval and military advisers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is an almost constant attendant because, unfortunately, it is impossible to discuss a large number of these questions irrespective of the state of the national finances. Constantly, also, questions have arisen in which we have been obliged to ask the overburdened Minister for Foreign Affairs to come to assist us. Indeed, he has asked us to deal with questions in which his own and other Departments are concerned, and on those occasions, of course, he has to be present. In the same way the Colonial Secretary attends whenever any question is raised in which the Colonies are directly interested; and we have had on more than one occasion also not merely the Colonial Secretary, but the Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who has given us valuable assistance. Observe the enormous advantage of this flexibility of constitution. If you laid down fixed members of the Committee every other person would come to the meetings on sufferance, either as an additional member or with a different *status*, and that would carry with it what would be regrettable in the highest degree—namely, that when any colonial representative came over on a question in which the Colonies were interested, he would not come on precisely the same footing as other members, but in the form, I will not say of a suppliant, but of a witness or of an ambassador bringing a request, or in some other capacity than that of a member of the Committee. He is now a full member of the Committee for a particular purpose, and that arrangement has the advantage of making known to him the documents of the Committee, some of which are of the most confidential character, and are not to be scattered broadcast all over the world. They remain in the keeping of the only fixed and permanent member of the Committee — namely, the Prime Minister himself. I admit that that constitution, which has no statutory obligation, and which can be changed by any successor of mine who desires to do so, is in itself at first sight singular. But those who habitually attend the Committee have found it convenient and flexible; we have not found it open to any objection; and if it be urged that it takes away from the Committee its authority, because no one knows of whom it is constituted, I would say that the Minutes state who was present and who agreed to the resolutions at which the Committee arrived. These resolutions remain on record for the benefit of ourselves and our successors, and there is not the slightest danger of the House of Commons believing that the resolutions are expressed on the authority of an important body, when, as a matter of fact, they are expressed on the opinion of a single individual who has perhaps very little authority.

I think that probably answers the Question put to me by the hon. and learned Member for Haddington, and, if so, it also answers the Question put to me by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. He said, and said truly, that some questions that the Committee of Defence have discussed involve very nice points of international law. That indeed is a fact, as any one who has served on the Committee during the present war knows to his cost; but for those purposes we ask the Attorney-General to attend. He is for those purposes a member of the Committee. He comes and gives us his opinion; if there is a vote taken he will give his vote, just like any other member of the Committee. So that, again, gives a further illustration of the great adaptability which the present constitution of the Committee gives to the varying circumstances of the national need. That is all I have to say in reply; and I can only thank the Committee, first, for having tolerated a very long speech at the beginning of the sitting, and then having patiently listened to such a defence as I am able to offer to the criticisms that they have in a very kindly spirit given utterance to during the course of the afternoon.

Mr. HARWOOD (Bolton), while considering that the appointment of a Committee of Defence was a step in the right direction, thought it did not go far enough and was not placed on a proper basis. There should be more accuracy in the use of terms. The Secretary for War was wrongly named. He was Secretary for the Army. He hoped the new offices in Whitehall would not be called the War Office if they were going to be used for the Army. We had two arms—the Army and the Navy—and we wanted one brain to govern the two. That brain should be the brain of the Minister for War. It might be said they could not entrust such power to one man, and probably that was in the mind of the Prime Minister when he organised the Committee of Defence. Why call it the Committee of Defence? They could not distinguish between defence and offence. When they were fighting they were fighting. When it was war it was war. The Committee should be the Committee of War, not of Defence, as we might be defending or we might be attacking. The Prime Minister had said the Committee of Defence had worked well, because this person and that person had been called in for this purpose and that purpose. But look at the South African War. They had no one responsible. They could not find the right horse on which to put the saddle of blame. The nation would not be content unless the Prime Minister organised some responsible body who could be blamed if things went wrong, and praised if things went right. A shifting or varying constitution was not the sort of thing to deal with a matter

of life and death such as war. He hoped, therefore, that the Prime Minister would place the matter on a logical basis, organise a Council of War, give it a definite constitution, and let Parliament be consulted as to how it should be constituted. Let the nation know who composed it, and let it be responsible to the nation.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought the question of finance ought to receive more attention from the Committee. The excellent principles which the Prime Minister had that day enunciated had not the slightest reflection in the Estimates of the year. If there was no serious danger of invasion, and the India problem was less pressing, why were we spending from £65,000,000 to £70,000,000 on the Army and the Navy this year, with Naval and Military Works Bills, involving a further expenditure of £6,000,000 or £7,000,000, to follow? There never was a Government which gave so little serious thought to the expenditure of public money as the Administration now in power. They had not paid their way in any single year. The Prime Minister had borrowed money and spent it everywhere, and he now told the misguided nation that the expenditure was all worthless. Although he was being told all the while that the policy was very questionable he still plunged on.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: This is pure romance.

Mr. LOUGH considered the interruption of the Prime Minister a most offensive one. He did not regard the matter as romance. For the last seven years he had urged this view; he, at least, was consistent, which was more than could be said of the Government. The way in which the question of cost was considered by the House of Commons and treated by the Prime Minister was simply shocking. Instead of meeting their liabilities the Government borrowed money, and would leave it to their successors to find means of paying it off. The only reason for the change of policy announced that day was that the nation had become angry, and the Prime Minister was afraid to go any further. The people were evidently going to take the matter into their own hands, and the sooner they did so the better, as matters could not possibly go on for many years longer with the present wretched management of national finance, for which the Prime Minister, more than anybody else, was responsible.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead) considered it a matter for congratulation that at last the military and naval policy of the country was co-ordinated under one control, and that there was at the head of affairs a body responsible as were the general staffs in European countries, but of much greater weight. The nation would rejoice to hear that the opinion of naval and military experts was now so harmonised that a serious invasion of this country might be regarded as impossible, and the announcement as to the diminished likelihood of an invasion of the North-West Frontier of India would be received with equal gratification. The foreign policy of Lord Salisbury had been amply justified. Five years ago we had three great land frontiers open to attack—the South African, the Canadian, and the Indian—and of those the only one that need now be seriously considered was the North West Frontier of India. Such a result redounded to the credit of the Administration.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House that the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS and MEANS was unable, owing to indisposition, to resume the Chair as Deputy-Speaker.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, in pursuance of the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) asked what course the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury proposed to adopt with regard to the talking out of the Motion on the Vote for the Committee of Defence by a supporter of the Government. In addition to there being several Army matters upon which information had been desired but not given, the Opposition had been anxious to take a division on the grave question of public extravagance. Under the circumstances he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to arrange for a continuance of the debate so that a decision might be taken.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) urged the advisability of an early day being given for the discussion of the Volunteer Vote. The logical conclusion to be drawn from the statement of the Prime Minister was that the Volunteers would not be required to be kept up to their present strength, and that probably was the guiding principle in the Secretary of State's policy. It at any rate pointed to the desirability of an early announcement being made as to the part the Volunteers were to play in the scheme of national defence.

SIR ELLIOT LEES (Birkenhead) said that, as his Parliamentary conduct had been impugned, he might say he had not the same opportunities of catching the Speaker's eye as hon. Members opposite, there being more Members on his side of the House, but he was quite sincere in his remarks. He had very serious views on the question of national defence, and he would be very glad if a further opportunity for discussion could be given.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he had been in the House for nearly twenty years, but he had never seen Parliamentary tactics reduced to the level to which the Prime Minister had brought them. Although the days allotted to Supply were supposed to be for the ventilation of the views of private Members, the Prime Minister made speeches of inordinate length, and then left the House at the critical moment at the close of the debate, allowing one of his supporters to talk the matter out. He hoped the time would soon come when the right hon. Gentleman would be thrown down from his ill-gotten eminence.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs), in supporting the request of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight, pointed out that many Members had come back to the House for the express purpose of taking part in the division. He suggested that the Government should allow the decision of the House to be taken on the Report stage.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) promised to bring the matter to the notice of the Prime Minister.

Question put, and agreed to.

NEW BILL.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (PILOTAGE).

Bill to amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in respect of Pilotage Certificates, ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Seymour King, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir John Colomb, Sir Robert Penrose FitzGerald, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Joyce, General Laurie, Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Gilbert Parker, Mr. James Reid, and Mr. Runciman.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (PILOTAGE) BILL.

"To amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in respect of Pilotage Certificates," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th May, and be printed. [Bill 210.]

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 12th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

London Squares and Enclosures (Preservation) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 21st of February and 31st of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petitions for early closing of; of Executive Committee of Stepney Ruridecanal Church of England Temperance Society; Reading and District Temperance Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS BILL [H.L.].

Bill (on Motion) (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

NEW BILL.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide for the appointment of an additional Church Estates Commissioner and for matters incidental thereto. Was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 72.)

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (LIVERPOOL, ETC.) BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON No. 1) BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

[Second Reading.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

The Earl of LEVEN and MELVILLE: My Lords, I have been asked to oppose this Bill on the ground that the people in the immediate neighbourhood where the school is proposed to be erected —Hotham Road, Putney—object, I believe without exception, to its erection, and that they have not had that opportunity, which the Education Act lays down, of bringing forward their objections to the proposed site. By this Bill a cruel injustice is done to the people who live in the immediate neighbourhood of the proposed site for the new school. The houses are of a superior class and inhabited by people with incomes of £300, £400, or £500 a year, and have nice gardens. The leases of some of the houses have only five years to run, and, the ground landlord being willing to sell, the authorities have not considered the interests of the tenants at all, but are recommending this site, in preference to one which is more suitable in other ways, on the ground that it can be acquired at a cheaper price owing to the shortness of the leases. In this matter not only the tenants affected, but the people residing on the opposite side of the road and in the immediate neighbourhood ought to be considered.

At a distance of from 200 to 300 yards from this site there are a large number of smaller houses; indeed, the whole of the surrounding district is covered with little houses inhabited by the working classes, and it may be that a site in that district is more expensive to purchase than the site in question, where the houses are larger and the leases have only a short period to run. But the authorities are not justified, in order to save expenditure, in inflicting a great injustice on the tenants of the houses scheduled. In Section 2, Sub-section 2, of the London Education Act it is laid down that the site of a public elementary school shall not be determined upon until after consultation with the council of the borough. I am informed that this section has not been complied with. On October 20th the London County Council wrote to the Wandsworth Borough Council stating that they had decided to obtain compulsory powers to acquire this site, and that was the first intimation the borough council had of it. On November 11th the borough council formally objected and proposed other sites, and I am informed that the council still object to this site.

The body called the school managers, who are elected one-third, I think, by the London County Council, and one-third by the ratepayers—at any rate, they are a thoroughly representative body—have considered this site, and condemned it by thirteen to one; and I am told that over 300 ratepayers have opposed it. At the local public inquiry which was held by the Education Board, not a single witness residing or interested in Putney gave evidence in support of this site; such evidence was only given by the London County Council officials. The children in the immediate neighbourhood attend higher-grade schools, and it is contended that the site for a public elementary school should be chosen nearer to the houses where the children live who would use the school. While these things do not generally move speedily, the progress of events on this particular occasion seems to have been extraordinarily rapid. The report of the Education Board Commissioner was dated April 6th. The advertisement inserted in the newspapers did not appear until May 5th—a month afterwards; but on May 9th, after the expiration of only four days, this Bill was put down in your Lordships' House for Second Reading. The persons affected urge that there has not been sufficient time given in this matter, and I appeal to my noble friend the noble Marquess at the head of the Board of Education to put the Bill off in order to give the inhabitants of the neighbourhood an opportunity of expressing the objections which they so strongly feel to it.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, I need hardly say that if I could meet the wish of my noble friend by postponing the Second Reading of this Bill, I should be delighted to do so, but it is impossible for me to accede to that request. Before the Bill was read a first time in your Lordships' House, the Board of Education had taken all the preliminary steps necessary under the Act of Parliament, and in the circumstances I do not think it is possible for me to postpone its further progress. My noble friend told a most pathetic tale with regard to the houses that are to be compulsorily taken under this Bill. I would, however, point out that the leases of the houses to which he alluded, and which are no doubt excellent houses, and occupied by well-to-do persons, have but a very few years to run. The houses were let on long leases, which, I am informed, expire in 1910 or 1911; and as the owner of the land on which these houses stand did not approve the proposal of the County Council, I do not think I should be justified in withholding permission. Moreover, many of the houses in the immediate neighbourhood are occupied by people whose children frequent the elementary schools.

I hope my noble friend will not think that I do not sympathise with those who occupy the houses adjoining the site. I do; but the County Council have pressed upon us the absolute necessity of a school being built in that area, and the amount of land available for the purpose being very limited they have naturally fixed upon the site which they think most suitable for the purpose, and convenient for the children in the neighbourhood. Two sites are in question. There is the Hotham Road site, in the borough of Wandsworth, and another site, 300 yards off, known as the Bigg's Road site. I do not think in point of convenience or suitability there is anything to choose between the two; but one could be acquired a great deal cheaper than the other, and the County Council very wisely selected the cheaper one—the Hotham Road site. The rateable value in this case is £265 a year; whereas the rateable value in the other case is £786 a year. In addition to that, the Hotham Road site would involve no re-housing, whereas on the Biggs Road site, which the noble Lord said was a preferable one, there is so considerable a population of the working classes that, according to statute, the County Council would have to undertake the building of houses to replace those taken down, and in all probability the erection of the school would be thereby delayed. It is agreed on all sides that a school is necessary in that district; and the County Council fixed upon the cheaper site and the site on which they could build a school at the shortest notice.

My noble friend contended that the objections of the inhabitants of Wandsworth had not been sufficiently heard. I do not for one moment deny that there has been considerable feeling against the compulsory purchase of this site, and I regret that we had to give our sanction to a site the acquisition of which caused such an amount of heart-burning; but I must take exception to the noble Earl's statement that the objections of those opposed to the purchase were not properly heard. The Board of Education, acting in acordance with the section which my noble friend quoted, sent down a Commissioner to inquire into the whole matter, and full notice was given of the inquiry, so that anyone who wished to object could attend and do so. The borough council were heard at the inquiry, and though I am bound to say they strongly objected on technical grounds at the commencement, they withdrew those objections during the proceedings at the public inquiry. As I have told your Lordships, the owner of the property did not oppose the grant of compulsory powers, and, after all, I think he is the most important person to be considered. I regret extremely that any action on the part of the Department, of which I am the head, should be the cause of heart-burnings among the people whose property is taken, but, as your Lordships know, there is considerable difficulty in finding sites for schools in the various districts of London, and, when it is decided that a site has to be taken, I am afraid it will seldom happen that there will not be objections from some quarter. I regret that I cannot see my way to comply with the request to postpone this Bill.

The Earl of LEVEN and MELVILLE: I must ask your Lordships' indulgence in order to move the rejection of this Bill. If I am correctly informed, over 300 ratepayers were represented by counsel at the local inquiry in opposition to the acquisition of this site, and not a single witness residing or interested in Putney gave evidence in support of it. In those circumstances I beg to move the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.' "—(*The Earl of Leven and Melville.*)

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I hope my noble friend will not persist in the objection he has raised to the Second Reading of this Bill. After all, it is absolutely necessary that these schools should be built, even though they may cause a certain amount of inconvenience to the people who live near them. This seems to be a case where a school is to be erected on the cheapest, and, apparently, the best site, and so far from there having been any want of inquiry, the inquiry seems to have been an extremely full one. No doubt the residents round about the particular site proposed for this school do not wish the school to be built in that particular place. That is a thing we quite sympathise with; but it does seem to me that the public advantage is to be considered and should weigh against the individual wishes of a certain number of residents. The real point which my noble friend Lord Leven has made is that the wishes of a certain number of people who live round this particular site should carry weight against the advantage of the whole district. I think the noble Marquess, the President of the Board of Education, made out a perfectly clear case that it is to the advantage of the district as a whole, and also of the ratepayers, that this particular site should be taken. I quite understand that the residents living near would prefer that the school should not be erected there, but, as I have said, the wishes of individuals must give way to the advantage of the district as a whole. I therefore hope my noble friend will not persist in his Amendment, for I think the case made out by the Education Board is one that will command the general assent of those who consider it from an impartial point of view.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I wish to join in the appeal that has just been made by my noble friend opposite to the noble Earl who moved the rejection of this Bill. If he had been able to show that there had been any omission or any irregularity in the proceedings, I think we should all of us have been inclined to entertain his proposal favourably, but I cannot learn that there was any such omission or irregularity. He has told us that the evidence taken at the local inquiry did not do entire justice to the feelings of some of the residents in the neighbourhood. That may be the case, but I am assured on the best authority that the inquiry which took place was an extremely full one, lasting two days; and I understand that the borough council was represented at that inquiry with great ability. I have no doubt that the erection of a school of this kind in the proximity of villas of the type which the noble Lord described may be regarded as an inconvenience by some of the residents in those villas, but surely that is not to be pressed as a reason for either not having the school at all or driving it to some less convenient site. I am told that the only alternative site was considered, and that that site was not only less convenient, but also, for the reasons given by the noble Marquess the President of the Education Board, much more expensive. With regard to the question of evidence, I am also told that evidence was in fact given in favour of the site by an alderman of the Wandsworth Borough Council. In these circumstances, I must say I think it would be a very strong order that this Bill should be rejected by your Lordships simply because some of the residents in the neighbourhood of the proposed school would prefer that the school should be built elsewhere.

THE EARL OF LEVEN AND MELVILLE: My Lords, after the statement which has just been made by the noble Marquess the Leader of the House, that an alderman of the borough of Wandsworth was in favour of the acquisition of this site, I am bound to say my case is very much weakened. But this is the first I have heard of it. I was informed that there was not a single inhabitant in favour of this site. After what has been said, I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment, but I hope that if anything can be done in Committee to lessen the hardship on the persons in question it will be done.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

House adjourned at five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 12*th May*, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Durham and Framwelgate, Hanley, and Southport," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 211.]

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Alexander Scott's Hospital," presented by the Lord-Advocate, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Tuesday next.

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dundee Water," presented by the Lord-Advocate, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Tuesday next.

Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Arbroath Corporation Water," presented by the Lord-Advocate, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Tuesday next.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kilmore and Kilbride, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Alva; Ayrshire; Benholm; Dundee; Dunfermline (two); and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from King's Norton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (CHILDREN) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

THAMES ESTUARY (LIGHT VESSELS).

Petition from Ramsgate, for connection with the shore by wireless telegraphy; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Ashton-under-Lyne; Ayr; Belfast; Chelsea; Fulham; Levenshulme; Liverpool; Manchester and Salford; and Rothesay; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th April; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 162.]

TRADE WITH SIBERIA.

Copy presented, of Report on the condition and prospects of British Trade in Siberia, by H. Cooke, Special Commissioner of the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

The Ministry of Commerce.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can say when he will be able to lay before the House the proposals of the Government in regard to improving the *status* of the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade, and the creation of a Ministry of Commerce, as promised in His Majesty's Speech from the Throne.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I am afraid I am not yet in a position to assign a date for the introduction of this measure.

British Trade in China.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that a number of British merchants have telegraphed from China to the Secretary of State representing that the Government of China ignores the Mackay Treaty, rendering the same ineffective in most essentials, and that the Government of China actively opposes the stipulations of that treaty as to currency, mining taxation, and navigation, His Majesty's Government intend to take action in reference to this representation.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) On the receipt of the representation referred to, a telegram was addressed to His Majesty's Minister at Peking, requesting him to obtain from the signatories a detailed statement of the matters which form the subject of their complaint, and which will receive the careful attention of His Majesty's Government.

Grants to Scotland for Education and for Relief of Rates.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he can give, for the year ended March 31st last the amount of the probate (or estate) duty grant received, the amount received of the proceeds of licences specified in the schedule to The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, the amount paid under cattle pleuro-pneumonia account, the amount paid to counties, burghs, etc. (relief of rates, etc.), and the balance which remained for relief of school fees, also the amount of the Scotch fee grant for the same year, and further for the same year the amount received under the heads of Excise duties on beer and spirits, and on Customs, under the Act of 1890, with the amount of the balance paid over to counties, burghs, etc., for relief of rates or technical education; and whether he can state the amount which stood at the credit of the fee grant account on March 31st last, after payment is made of the fee grant of 12s. per child.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The amount paid under cattle pleuro-pneumonia account for the year ending March 31st, 1905, was £1,440. The amount of fee grant vote for 1904–5 was £344,151, all of which was spent. The amount at the credit of the fee grant account on March 31st, 1905, was £109,473 8s. 1d. I regret I am unable to answer the other parts of the hon. Member's Question, as the requisite material is not yet available.

Period of Repayment of Loans under Naval and Military Works Acts in Respect of Halifax, Bermuda, Jamaica, and St. Lucia.

MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury over what periods the repayments of the loans under the Naval and Military Works Acts made in respect of Halifax, Bermuda, Jamaica, and St. Lucia extend.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Under the Naval Works Acts previous to

1903 the period was not exceeding thirty years from July 6th, 1895, and under the Military Works Acts previous to 1903 it was not exceeding thirty years from April 8th, 1897. Under the Naval and Military Works Acts of 1903 the period is not exceeding thirty years from the date of borrowing.

Board of Inland Revenue and the Collection of Agricultural Statistics.

SIR CHARLES WELBY (Nottinghamshire, Newark): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will explain under what authority the Board of Inland Revenue, in certain cases, imposed the work of collecting agricultural statistics totally unconnected with questions of taxation, other than those known as the Corn Returns, upon their officers.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The arrangements for collection of agricultural statistics by officers of Inland Revenue were made nearly forty years ago, under the authority of the Treasury. Numerous other similar arrangements have been made from time to time whereby one Department of the public service is authorised to undertake on behalf of another Department duties for the transaction of which it may have special facilities.

Direct and Indirect Taxation in Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the proportion of direct to indirect taxation in the two islands of Great Britain and Ireland respectively during each of the last three years.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The proportions of direct and indirect taxation in Great Britain and Ireland respectively, including local taxation revenue and excluding coal duty, were as follows:—

	Great Britain.		Ireland.	
	Direct.	Indirect.	Direct.	Indirect.
1902–3 - -	53·9	46·1	26·6	73·4
1903–4 - -	50·6	49·4	27·8	72·2
1904–5 (estimated)	50·4	49·6	27·4	72·6

In an Answer to a Question of the hon. Member for South Kilkenny on the 13th † ultimo, I gave particulars to show that these proportions must not be taken to imply that Irishmen contribute more per head to indirect taxation than, or even as much as, inhabitants of Great Britain.

Deaths from Plague in India.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he can state the number of deaths from plague in the Punjab for each of the months of January, February, and March of this year; and the total number of deaths in India during each of the same months.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*)

	Punjab.	India.
January - -	29,009	126,526
February - -	31,779	126,041
‡Four weeks ending 1st April -	60,046	199,221

‡ Compiled from the Weekly Tabular Returns, as the Report for the calendar month of March has not yet been received from India.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 84.

Polling Booths in County Tyrone.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, since the passing of the Local Government Act, the polling booth for Coalisland and New Mills was fixed at Brackville, in the village of Coalisland; that this year the polling station has been fixed at New Mills, an exclusively Orange quarter, on account of reports of disturbances during the last two elections in Coalisland, which reports were not made by any public body; and whether, in view of the police reports as to the only disturbance that took place, and of the fact that, of the total number of 600 voters in this unit, 450 reside in Coalisland and 150 in New Mills, and the greater number of these would be unable to travel two miles after six o'clock and record their votes, that the accommodation in New Mills is unsatisfactory, there being neither telegraph office nor police station, steps will be taken to prevent the proposed change being carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The duty of determining the number and situation of polling places and stations at local government elections devolves upon the returning officers for these elections, and the Local Government Board have no authority to intervene in the matter. It is open to the hon. Member to make a representation on the subject to the returning officer for county Tyrone, who is the secretary of the county council.

Outrage at Gortumloe, County Westmeath—Police Inquiry.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police authorities have taken steps to bring to justice the parties who fired into Deboe's dwelling-house at Gortumloe, county Westmeath; has the portion of the ammunition discovered on the scene of the outrage been compared with the stocks kept by the local dealers; and has any inquiry been made as to the movements of the parties on the occasion of the outrage who are licensed to keep breechloading guns in the locality; and whether he can state what has been the result of the action, if any, of the police authorities in this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The police have used, and are continuing to use, all possible exertions to discover and bring to justice the offenders in this case. It is, for obvious reasons, undesirable to detail the steps which have been taken to that end, but the hon. Member may rest assured that nothing will be left undone which would tend to secure the object in view.

Interference with a Nationalist Procession at Loop, County Kerry.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state on what grounds a contingent of Lissan Nationalists, returning on 17th March from a political meeting at Loop, county Kerry, were sought to be forcibly prevented from proceeding by the same route which they had traversed in the morning; whether, seeing that Moneymore or district were not proclaimed, what official had power to disperse an orderly procession; whether he can state who gave the order to the police to use their batons; whether he is aware that after the baton charge the contingent was allowed to proceed by the original route; that prosecutions have since been instituted against the people who had been thus attacked; and whether inquiries will be made as to the cause of the discontent amongst the Catholic population of the district with regard to the character of the local police sergeant.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The proceedings on this occasion are the subject of a pending prosecution, and until the case is decided I must decline to discuss the matter.

County Donegal Land Appeals—Delay in Delivery of Judgment.

MR. McFADDEN (Donegal, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of delay in the delivery of judgment in the appeals in the land cases from county

Donegal, heard at Strabane on the 8th February last.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Judgments were delivered in these cases on the 8th instant.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from serving on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Waldron and Mr. Harrington; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Vincent Kennedy and Mr. Charles Devlin.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill: Mr. Malcolm; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Ernest Flower.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

VEHICLES' LIGHTS BILLS.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted and forty Members being present.

***Mr. BIGWOOD** (Middlesex, Brentford) said that in asking the House of Commons to give a Second Reading to this Bill he was asking hon. Members to assent to a principle which had already been carried out throughout the length and breadth of the land. Therefore, he did not think that he needed to take up a large amount of the time of the House because he thought there were very few hon. Members who would dispute the advisability of passing this very simple Bill. He did not remember a more simple Bill being brought before the attention of the House of Commons. So far as he could see it did not alter in one iota what already existed in the well-administered counties of England. Clause 3 of the Bill did not provide that additional lights should be carried, but it simply insisted that one light should be carried to show either before or behind the vehicle. No doubt it would be said that the farmers could not afford this extra cost, but he wished to point out that by an Act recently passed they had given to the farmers 50 per cent. of their rates, and they were now being told that they were really so poor that they could not afford the additional cost of a penny rush-light at the back of their vehicles. He did not think this needed much talking about. All he was asking for in this Bill was to establish uniformity of a practice which was now carried out in the majority of the best-regulated counties in England. He was not championing or voicing the objects of any of the associations which had made themselves so prominent—he alluded to motor-car, cycling, and road associations. They could very well take care of themselves. He was speaking entirely from practical experience gained in connection with by-laws with which he had been associated in passing for the county of Middlesex.

Those who knew Middlesex were aware that it was a county adjoining London through which there was a large amount of slow and sleepy traffic from the agricultural districts, and the drivers in charge of such traffic were not always found proceeding on the right side of the road, and the result was not everything that could be desired. He could assure hon. Members opposite that it was not so easy to pass by-laws as they appeared to think. No doubt he would be told that all they needed to do was to pass a by-law and get the Government Department to confirm it, and then they would have all they wanted. But they would not then have all they required because what he wanted was uniformity, and that was all he asked for in this Bill. It was much more simple to accept a Bill of this sort in order to secure uniformity, for it would make the general practice the law. At the present time the Government Department was bothered enough by various by-laws. Some people expected the Government Department actually to approach the county councils and place before them model by-laws, but besides the county councils they had also to deal with the boroughs. This Bill would consolidate the whole of the regulations upon this question, and he would leave motor-car owners and cyclists to look after themselves. A similar Bill to this was discussed in the year 1897, but since that time there had been an enormous increase in the usage of public roads by motors and other vehicles. The motor was now being used for commercial purposes, and of course they must improve their regulations in this improving age. He remembered the time when lights were few and far between on the country roads. As a young man he always found his eyes on a dark night were good enough for anything, but they had got beyond that now. Motor-cars and motor-bicyles—fast running vehicles—were obliged to carry lights, but the slow-going vehicles and the cart left on the side of the road were not required to carry a light and so they were liable to be run into. Was that reasonable? In his opinion it was a perfect anomaly. This Bill sought to do what was being done in every well-regulated administrative county in this country.

On what ground was the hon. Member opposite going to move the rejection of this Bill? Surely if there were any benefits to be derived from it Scotland ought not to be excluded. He was aware that Scotland was a favourite touring place, but that was all the more reason why Scotland should have the benefit of the Bill as well as England. He would like to give to the House a few reasons in favour of the passing of this measure. In the county of Middlesex they had been establishing a very large system of light railways running into the suburbs and through into the country. He had received a copy of a letter from the general manager of the Wakefield and District Light Railways Company which had been written to the general managers of other companies, in which it was pointed out that as tramways were now being carried further into the suburbs, the need for an enactment by which the men in charge of vehicles should be forced to safeguard themselves and others using the roads against accidents was becoming more seriously felt. The letter further pointed out that it seemed absurd that tramcars and motor-cars should be compelled to carry lights behind whilst a crawling waggon with the driver often asleep should be exempt from carrying any lights. Tramcars were as a rule so brilliantly lighted that it would indeed be a blind man who ran into a tramcar from behind, whilst motor-cars travelled so fast that it was almost impossible for ordinary vehicles to run into them from behind, and yet both tramcars and motor-cars had to carry lights behind. If hon. Members would only do him the honour of reading this Bill, they would see that it did not add any fresh powers in any shape or form to what already existed in this country. His only desire in pressing forward this Bill was to pass a measure which would benefit all those who used public roads. He begged to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

LIEUT.-COLONEL TUFNELL (Essex, S.E.) said that as an agricultural Member he hoped he should be allowed to say a few words upon this most admirable Bill which had been so ably introduced by the hon. Member for Middlesex. It was quite true that along country lanes motor-cars and vehicles were running very often at great rates, and as they were all aware country roads and lanes were not lighted at all, so that the risk was all the greater to ordinary people who had to drive or walk along those roads at night. It was all very well in towns where there were lots of lights, but this Bill would not apply so much to the towns as to the country districts. One objection, however, he should like to point out, and his objection applied to the vast number of country carts which passed from the county of Essex to the London market. Very often it happened that in the early morning the drivers of these carts fell asleep and therefore they became a source of danger to the ordinary travelling public. The objection he wished to put forward was that in the case of a sudden puff of wind or a severe jolt, this was often sufficient to put out the light attached to a vehicle. It had been frequently found that cyclists had been brought up before the magistrates and fined, not because they had no lights on their bicycles, but because the light had happened for the moment to go out in consequence of a puff of wind or a jolt. Admirable as this Bill was, he thought there should be something put in the measure to provide that if the lights accidentally went out in this way the drivers should not be fined. The fourth clause proposed that, "any person who shall cause or permit any vehicle to be drawn or driven" without being provided with the lamp or lamps required should be liable to a penalty. He suggested that if the word "wilfully" were inserted before the word "cause" the case would be met. If a lamp had gone out accidentally it would be rather hard that a man should be fined. Subject to that exception, he cordially supported the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he absolutely dissociated himself from any reflection on the hon. Members who moved and seconded the Second Reading, both of whom had spoken in a plain, practical, businesslike manner. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading had stated that there might be discussion on this measure for the purpose of preventing discussion on the Women's Enfranchisement Bill, which was the second order on the Paper that day. He could assure the promoters of the Bill now before the House that nothing was further from his thought than that. He would be able to prove to the satisfaction of the House that there was a strong and deep-rooted feeling against the Bill among his constituents. It was on that ground, and that ground only, he had given notice that he would move the rejection of the Bill. If he might say so without offence, the speeches of the mover and seconder suggested that the Bill was prompted partly by reactionary Toryism, and partly by a desire to meet the demands of a very small, but very selfish class of men, namely, the motorists, who were making increasing encroachments on the rights of the general public. What he had described as the reactionary Toryism of the measure was to be found in the fact that it would strike at the principle of local government in the country. That was one of his main objections to the Bill.

It had been urged in support of the Bill that it would establish uniformity in the law. He and his friends who opposed the Bill did not want uniformity; they desired to leave to local authorities a fairly free hand in those matters affecting their own people. When the hon. Member said that the measure was introduced to do away with the feeling which existed in county councils in favour of their agricultural friends, he gave the keynote of the whole Bill. There was not a county council where the members would take the responsibility of putting an impost of this kind on the people. That was because it was felt that intense inconvenience would be caused. In Scotland the condition of affairs had been this. In every county in Scotland farms were divided by the public roads, and farmers had always been in the habit of using these roads for bringing cattle backwards and forwards, and for carrying on general farming operations. That being the state of affairs, the House could understand why it was that a feeling of intense irritation had been caused in Scotland over this measure.

He wished to state shortly some of the reasons which had influenced the Scotch Members, who were practically unanimous against the Bill. In December last this question was discussed at a local election in which he took part, and so strong was the feeling which was manifested on the part of farmers and agriculturists, that, before the end of the election both candidates declared that they would not support any measure of this sort. On January 14th a meeting was held in the Agricultural Hall, Edinburgh, at which a resolution was passed condemning the proposals in the Bill on the ground that they would seriously hamper agriculturists in their work, and provide facilities for driving motor-cars at a speed inconsistent with the rights and the safety of the public. There was an absolutely unanimous feeling against these proposals on the part of the farmers who attended the meeting. This Bill did not propose to enact that when sheep or cattle were being taken along the public roads after dark there should be a boy in front and another behind, each carrying a light, but he would remind the House that that was the original proposal. In February, after the House met, the heather was on fire, so to speak, in Scotland, and he received a telegraphic communication from his constituents in Orkney stating that they were deeply alarmed by the report of the proceedings of the meeting in the Scotch papers, and at the effect which this measure would have on them. He replied that he did not believe there was the least possibility of the Bill being brought forward, or of the Government giving any countenance or support to it. The Employers' Parliamentary Council had passed a resolution expressing their strong objection to this Bill, and stating that if any further legislation dealing with lights on vehicles was required it should be limited to vehicles going faster than walking pace. The view expressed in that resolution seemed to him to be a very reasonable one.

The Scotch Members strongly objected to the measure on two grounds. In the first place it would destroy the power which could at present be exercised by the local authority in this matter. There was a constant effort being made to centralise all authority in this House, and to do away with the control and jurisdiction of the local authorities. He thought it was of the utmost importance that the power and control of the local authorities should be protected and supported in every possible way, and that people living in the country should not be able to come to this House, so to speak, to shuffle out of their responsibilities. The county councils dare not propose a reactionary measure of this sort, and, if that was so, why should Parliament enable them to get out of their responsibility where they had very properly refused to exercise their powers. This question, at any rate in Scotland, had been brought forward by the Motor Union, and they had proposed even more drastic measures than were embodied in this Bill. The other reason why the House should reject the Bill was that it had not been in print for more than forty-eight hours. He had asked Mr. Deputy-Speaker whether it was in order to move the Second Reading of a Bill which had not been printed, and it was no breach of confidence to say that the reply he received was that it was an excellent reason for moving its rejection. There were many hon. Members who had had no opportunity of studying its provisions. The whole of his constituents were bitterly opposed to the Bill, believing that rights and privileges which had been enjoyed from time immemorial would be seriously infringed. They felt that the Bill had been brought forward by a small class of selfish and greedy persons who desired to use the public roads for their own benefit. He begged to move.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire), in seconding the Amendment, said he desired to dissociate himself from the imputation of any motive in connection with the discussion of this measure. He was told that the desire to protract the discussion had reference to a much more attractive subject than the one on which they were now engaged. He did not suppose it was possible to afford a better illustration of the paradoxical nature of this measure than was presented by the fact that it was moved by the hon. Member for the Brentford Division of Middlesex and opposed by the hon. Member for Orkney. The contrast between the character of the constituencies of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill and the hon. Member who moved its rejection was a sufficient argument against the Bill. He did not dispute the competence of his hon. friend to speak of the necessities of the traffic in Middlesex, but would he not allow the Scotch Members some discretion in managing their own affairs? Parliament had committed that duty to the county councils. Was Parliament prepared to withdraw that responsibility? If that were so, he was afraid that all their talk about devolution and encouragement of local responsibility must have been exceedingly hollow, because as soon as the local discretion was exercised they were to be told that it was inconvenient to the public. He had listened in vain to the speech of his hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill for any valid reason for what he called uniformity. The hon. Gentleman most faithfully described the condition of the traffic in Middlesex highways; but he observed that the hon. Gentleman made a curious exemption. He drew an alarming picture of the risks incurred by travellers if a cart were left unlighted by the side of a road, but he also observed, with some surprise, that the hon. Member allowed the wheelbarrow so to remain without a light. Now, an accident from an unlighted wheelbarrow might be quite as serious as from an unlighted cart. The danger of unlighted carts was, he could not help thinking, in a great degree imaginary, because motor-cars, in their own interest, carried a strong head-light. During last winter he had travelled as many hundred miles by night in a motor-car as most men. He had to do so in order to catch the main line train twenty miles off his place; and he said, without hesitation, that he had never had the slightest inconvenience from unlighted carts; but he had had some difficulty with unlighted flocks of sheep. If the hon. Member did not extend the Bill to other obstacles than vehicles he would not do much to increase the safety of travelling by night on country roads.

He thought the most serious objection to this Bill was the time at which it had been brought forward. Owing to the inexperience, unskilfulness, and in some cases the criminal carelessness of some people who used motors, there was no doubt that public opinion in the country was very profoundly agitated; and the question with reasonable people was how that traffic was to be properly controlled. Well, in the interest of the measure itself, and of those who supported it, it was unfortunate that it should have been brought forward at this time; because, let his hon. friend's motives in bringing this measure on now be what they might, he and his associates would be credited with acting in the interest of the motor traffic. He did not think that this was a time when Parliament would willingly place any class or some industry at an inconvenience by laying restrictions on it in the interest of those who had rather high views of their privileges in the use of the roads.

The hon. Member for Orkney had rightly described the view taken of this Bill by agriculturists and by public bodies in Scotland. He had gone down to Scotland last week to attend a meeting of his own county council. He could not say that he had read the Bill. He did not know its provisions when he was asked what he intended to do about it when it came before the House. Its provisions were roughly explained to him. He did not know that the Bill was in charge of his hon. friend; and he trusted his reply would not be regarded as very disrespectful to him or his constituents. But he answered that from the description given of it, it was a Cockney measure, and that he could not imagine that this Parliament, or any future Parliament, would lay such a burden on agriculturists as would be imposed by this Bill. Now, he might be right or he might be wrong; but he asked the House to consider whether the conditions of traffic in Middlesex were a sufficient reason for imposing what must be irksome restrictions on traffic in thinly-populated rural districts?

Had a case been made out for the Bill? What was the object of having uniformity in regulations applying to two different sets of circumstances? He hoped that his hon. friend would be so convinced of the undesirableness of the proposals in the Bill that he would withdraw it; at all events, that he would confine its provisions to those parts of the country where they were better appreciated than in Scotland. Why, in this Bill, the hon. Gentleman proposed to repeal a clause in the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act of 1903, over which Parliament spent a great deal of time, and which it was certainly a strange thing to interfere with in a private Member's Bill. He could see no advantage to be expected from this measure, and no reason why it should be pursued any further. He would ask hon. Members for Ireland what they thought of extending this measure to the country districts of Ireland. [Cries of "It does not extend to Ireland."] Well, if it did extend to Ireland how would hon. Members from that country look upon it? He was very much mistaken indeed if they would not strongly object to it. He had great pleasure in seconding the Motion for its rejection.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said that this small Bill was of considerable importance to all classes of the community, because there was hardly any one who had not, in one shape or another, the necessity of using the public roads. He thought there was considerable danger to all kinds of traffic from slow-moving vehicles without lights. The first matter which the House had to consider was whether it was necessary that vehicles should have lights when upon the roads. It was supposed, very often, that the object of a light on a travelling vehicle was to give the person who drove it an opportunity of seeing the road in front of him and the ditches on either side. Now, as a matter of fact, that was not the real object of the light. He did not know about motor-cars, because he never owned one and hoped he never would. The lights of motor-cars were so strong that it was possible for the driver to see the ditches and the various obstructions on the road; but he had been in the habit of using horse-driven vehicles for many years, and he could say that, as a rule, unless you were passing a coach where there were five or six lights, these were no guide. In an ordinary vehicle the light was very often a drawback rather than an assistance in showing obstacles on the road because of the shadows which it cast. The object of a light on a vehicle was to let people see that somebody else was coming along the road. There was a case in which he himself was driving along a narrow road in the dark with a light and he suddenly came upon a vehicle without a light and a collision took place. Fortunately not much damage was done, but it might have eventuated in serious consequences. He thought it was proved, beyond doubt, that it was necessary that all vehicles should carry lights.

Then the question came in, were lights compulsory at the present moment? So far as he knew, in the majority of counties in England the county councils had passed by-laws making lights compulsory; and, so far as he knew, these by-laws had been sufficient to meet the public requirements of safety, and had been satisfactory to the great majority of the people concerned in making use of the roads. No doubt there had been cases where brewers, millers, bakers, and butchers who used the country roads might perhaps have objected to being compelled to carry a light; but it must be remembered that those who used the roads paid very little towards their upkeep, and that they should be obliged to carry a light. Perhaps, in regard to farmers, it was a different thing. It must be remembered that they did not use the roads very much except in a dairy-farming country, where the milk carts went to the railway stations in the early morning or late in a winter's evening. In the two counties with which he was connected he knew that lights were carried. The question arose whether, in view of these facts, the House of Commons should pass a Bill making the carrying of lights compulsory? The argument had been used in favour of this measure that it established uniformity. He agreed very much with what the hon. Gentleman opposite had said. He believed that uniformity could hardly be established all over the country because the conditions were different. It was self-evident that the conditions varied in Middlesex and Orkney.

There was an argument against the Bill which seemed to him to be very strong. What was the use of establishing county councils and district councils if they did not leave questions of this sort—the lighting of vehicles

—in their own districts to their own control. He was not sure whether it would not have been advisable to pass a simple and reasonable Bill, but he did not think this Bill was either reasonable or simple. He believed the Bill had only been printed a few days ago, and hon. Members could hardly have had time to study it. However, he had looked at it, and confessed that some of its provisions were perfectly ludicrous. Subsection 2 provided that—

> "Where any portion of the load which is being carried in or upon, a vehicle projects more than six feet to the rear beyond the back of the vehicle, such vehicle . . . shall be provided with two lamps, one of which shall be constructed and placed at the front of the vehicle upon the extreme off-side of such vehicle."

What was the extreme off-side? That light was to be a white light, but who was to decide what a white light was? In addition to that there was to be a red tail-light. He thought it was perfectly absurd. What on earth was the advantage of a tail-light? One could always see the light on the off side, which cast a shadow. If the driver was asleep it did not matter much whether there was a tail-light or not. A tail-light was not only useless, but would cause a large expense to farmers and small carriers which was altogether unnecessary. It was provided that if the off-side lights had a little red disc at the back that would be sufficient. Now, a dairy farmer who sent his milk in a low cart to the railway station very often had a small lamp which was fixed on the splashboard; but the little red disc would be of no use because one could not see the splashboard from behind, and the farmer would have to put an iron rod on the off-side so that he could fix the lamp with the red light disc on it. He maintained that that would be quite impossible, and therefore a farmer with a big slow-moving wagon would have to have two lights, one in front and one behind.

There were other proposals in the Bill to which he would draw the attention of the House. Section 2 said that the term "vehicle" included every carriage or conveyance, whether with or without wheels, wherein any person or commodity was or could be carried or conveyed. Now a horse was a vehicle without a wheel; a horse was something on which any person or commodity could be carried or conveyed. Therefore a horse came under this category. Just consider what might happen! Ladies who went to a hunt meet frequently returned to their homes twelve or thirteen miles off in their carriage, leaving their servants to take their horses home. In the case of his daughter and himself, for instance, he left his servant to bring the horses back, one horse being led. Apparently he would, under this Bill, require four lights—one on the servant's arm, one on his back, another somewhere on the side-saddle of the led horse, and a red lamp at his tail. To him that seemed to show the absurdity of the provisions of this Bill. Again, an old woman in the village who had been doing a washing of clothes for a neighbour and was taking it home would be a conveyance wherein any commodity was or could be carried or conveyed. Would that old woman have to carry a light also? He had endeavoured shortly to put before the House the very many objections to this Bill. He did not think they could be remedied in Committee. He understood that it was suggested that Scotland should be exempted from the Bill, but if the Bill were bad for Scotland it would be bad for England. He should vote against the Second Reading of this measure.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said that like all those who had hitherto spoken, except the hon. Member who had introduced the Bill, he was wholly opposed to it. It was most unfair that a Bill of this character should only have been put into the hands of hon. Members on the previous morning, and that they should be asked to take the Second Reading with such speed. The hon. Member who proposed the Bill must be well aware that the general opinion in Scotland, and in England as well, was opposed to it. It had not the remotest chance of passing through the House, and even if passed it would not be the best means of settling the motor question. In the interest of public business he appealed to the hon. Gentleman to recognise the condition of opinion in the House, that it was hopeless for him to proceed with the Bill, and that he should therefore withdraw it. It had been suggested that Scotland should be exempted from the Bill. He should certainly accept the exemption of Scotland; but he should oppose the Bill even if applied to England. He held that it was preposterous to take away the duty of regulating road traffic from the local authorities. What were these local authorities there for except to discharge such duties? He thought this was a most retrograde measure.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said that the Cyclists' Tourist Union had supported this Bill for many years, and on their behalf he should like to recommend it as worthy of the serious consideration and support of the House. Those who, on business or pleasure, used bicycles after dark were exposed to great danger and risk owing to the negligence of sleepy or tipsy carters who kept neither to the proper side of the road nor carried lights. The hon. Member for Orkney had given a very good account of the wide Scotch roads, but things were different in England; and whatever might be the case in regard to Scotland, he urged that the Bill should be adopted for England and Wales.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract) said it was hardly fair for hon. Members to speak at such length on this measure, not in the interest of the Bill itself, but to prevent the Bill on the second order coming on. This Bill was produced, it was alleged, in the interest of the blessed word "uniformity," which he thought was as good a word for the purpose as "Mesopotamia." In his opinion there had been far more people killed on account of that word "uniformity" than in all the ages by carts driven without lights. This Bill struck at the root of all local government. It was stated by the hon. Gentleman who moved the Bill that the condition of the roads in the districts round the Metropolis was absurd, and that the local authorities desired this Bill because they were afraid to put their own by-laws in regard to traffic into force. He denied that. He thought the local enactments worked very well. He thought that the motor-cars scorching along the roads with great flaring lights, were far more dangerous to the ordinary travelling public than even wagons without lights. Motor-car drivers had no consideration for anybody. They went ahead regardless of consequences, and they had had several instances of late in which the drivers had displayed utter callousness. He was told that in Denmark the speed in the day time of these cars was limited to eight miles an hour, and that they were prohibited from travelling at night. He did not suggest that such stringent regulations could be enforced in this country, but certainly something should be done to produce a better state of affairs. To return to the Bill. In his opinion it would inflict great hardship on the ordinary farmer. The cost might not be very great, but the inconvenience would be considerable, because if the Bill became law a farmer who moved a cart from a field on one side of the road to one on the other side would have to have a light. He had ridden a great many miles at night and had not met with danger from vehicles without lights. He would ask the House, in the interests of the ordinary travelling public, not to make the use of the roads more easy for high-speed travelling motor-cars.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) objected to the inclusion of Scotland in the Bill. However important it might be in counties like Middlesex or Lancashire to apply such regulations it certainly was not necessary for Scotland. It seemed to him the present arrangement which left the regulations for lighting vehicles in the hands of the county councils was much better and more suited to the localities. This Bill applied not only to the ordinary highways of the country, but also to the most remote and secluded Highland roads, and he ventured to suggest it was most absurd to insist on the same regulations for roads in the neighbourhood of London and other large cities and towns and for those in distant parts of Scotland. One result of passing this Bill would be to tempt the farmer in Scotland to disregard the law, and that was always a misfortune. Then why was Ireland excluded from the Bill. It was not because the regulations were unsuited to the country, but because it was known that the Irish Members were opposed to the measure, and would constitute a solid compact body which would prevent the Bill getting through. The representatives of Scotland were equally opposed to the Bill, and he therefore recommended the promoters to agree to the exclusion of that country from it.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said he had listened with great interest to the debate, and did not believe the hon. Member for Middlesex would find many supporters for his Bill in the House. He thought it would be most objectionable to impose a hard-and-fast rule with regard to the carrying of lights over the country at large. Local authorities should be left the discretion, which they now possessed, of regulating the lights according to different classes of traffic and local needs. He knew that in Scotland and in some counties in England it was the custom to exempt from these regulations vehicles not built upon springs and which usually proceeded at a slow walking pace. But now it was proposed to sweep all vehicles of whatever kind into one net. He ventured to say, in the interest of both Scottish and English agriculturists, that such a proposal was impossible and that the House would never consent to it. Early that year he was present at a very large and representative meeting of Scottish agriculturists in Edinburgh. There were in attendance 400 or 500 delegates representing sixty associations, and they unanimously passed a resolution condemning in the strongest terms the measure now before the House. He was very much struck by a statement made by one of the farmers—a very distinguished Scottish agriculturist, whose brother held a high and responsible position on the Underground Railway system in London. The speaker said he had on the average two or three carts going daily to Glasgow, and it would cost him £50 a year to provide the lamps. He would require at least thirty, and in addition a man to look after them. The Bill would inflict a grave hardship on agriculturists. The high roads were being constantly used by the carts of farmers in the ordinary course of their avocation, and if this Bill were passed they would be obliged, if they only crossed a road from one field to another, to provide lights in the morning and evening. He did not think the House was prepared to impose that obligation on them.

The Bill was for the benefit of motorists. The proper course was for motorists to use the roads at a moderate speed. He believed that the great body of owners of motor-cars would not tolerate the excesses committed by some of the men in charge of them, and he for one regretted that such misuse was made of the roads. After all, the roads were constructed long before motor-cars came into existence, and he did think it strange they should be asked to pass into law a Bill containing such extremely severe provisions simply in order to give certain people—who only, after all, used a fraction of the roads—opportunities for more speedy travel. Motor-cars, in fact, did not penetrate into many parts of the country, and, as the roads were made and kept up at the public expense the ratepayers ought to have more consideration shown them. The hon. Member for the Brentford Division of Middlesex referred to the use of the roads for light railways—well, he for one thought light railways were out of place on high roads. He hoped the House would, by an overwhelming majority, reject this measure.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said he was neither a cyclist nor the owner of a motor-car, but circumstances compelled him to ride upon the roads a great deal, and he had consequently a very fair knowledge of what was going on. He had no desire to interfere with the consideration of any other Bill, and would consequently make his observations as brief as possible. But he wished to point out that in one district, where provisions of this nature had been in operation for some time, no complaint whatever had been made, and in view of the opposition shown to this Bill he thought it desirable to make it known that there were a large number of people satisfied with provisions of this kind. Had he anticipated that so much opposition would have been shown to this measure he would have ascertained from a number of county councils, which had framed by-laws of their own, what had been their experience, and that experience might well have been placed against the complaints made by those who lived in the northern part of the Empire. Apart altogether from motors and cycles, he believed there was a necessity for a Bill of this nature, and he thought it important that there should be a tail-light on wagons, and that that light should be so affixed on timber trollies and other vehicles as to show to those coming up from behind the exact extent of the load being carried. Special lights were provided for this purpose which could be used with great efficiency. As to the exact position in which the lights should be placed, he had seen lights abroad underneath the conveyance in such a way that it was very difficult to see them at all, and yet they fulfilled the letter of the law. He cordially supported the Bill, and was surprised to find that so many Members took a different view of it.

*Mr. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) said that, although representing a Lincolnshire constituency, he had not received a single communication from any agricultural association against this Bill, but he had on the other hand received many communications from cycling associations and others in favour of it. If there had been any great opposition against the Bill on the part of the farming community the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford would certainly have been in his place to speak for the farmers. He was not at all certain that in the end the Bill would not prove to be rather beneficial than prejudicial to the agricultural community. The cost imposed by the Bill would be infinitesimal—probably not more than £2 a year—and in addition it would give the farmer a considerable amount of protection, not in the tariff sense, but against accidents. In fact, it would be a form of insurance. He had the greatest sympathy for the farming class, but he thought it futile to suggest that they should be exempted on the ground of cost. All vessels at sea had to be lighted whether they were Cunard liners owned by wealthy corporations or fishing smacks belonging to comparatively poor people, and a heavy penalty would be incurred in addition to the risk of being run down if a fishing smack was not lighted. That farmers might be exempted during the hay harvest, the lights could be so placed as to obviate all danger of fire. Nor could he agree that summer nights were lighter than winter nights, because the foliage of the trees in the wooded parts of the country threw so much shadow over the roads that it was more difficult to see in summer than in winter.

He was constrained to vote for this Bill from personal experience. Last summer when cycling at night in the neighbourhood of Slough he came across a man lying on the ground bleeding profusely from the head. After being taken to the infirmary the man died, and at the coroner's inquest it was discovered that he had been scorching on a bicycle, and, riding with his head down, had run into a waggon, which he failed to see, and sustained the injuries from which he succumbed. Considerations of humanity alone ought to be sufficient to induce Members to support the Bill. He could not see that the measure embodied reactionary Toryism as had been suggested. It applied to bicyclists rather than to any other class of the community, and the bicycle was the poor man's horse. It was not at all a motorists' Bill; in fact, motors would benefit from it far less than any other description of vehicle, because having such powerful lights they were well able to see far ahead. As to sheep on the road they always raised considerable dust and gave plenty of warning, so that no traps were likely to run into them. With regard to wheelbarrows and perambulators there might be some slight danger, but as a man had neither an on-side nor an off-side it would be difficult to determine on what part of his person a light should be placed.

He did not see why Ireland should be included in the Bill, inasmuch as there was practically no traffic on the roads at night except possibly in the North, and what traffic there was generally consisted of donkeys carrying turf or carts of so light a character that they would not cause any serious damage in case of collison. As to the argument that no county council would dare to impose such a burden, he had already shown that the impost was not a large one. The necessity for uniformity was very important, as it would be extremely confusing to pass from one county where they were many lights into a county where there were none, and the line of demarcation was seldom clearly defined. In nearly every foreign country the different provinces had regulations requiring lights to be placed at the tail of vehicles, and he believed that if the Bill were passed into law it would be most beneficial in preventing accidents throughout the country. For these reasons and for others which had already been urged he supported the Bill.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said he had risen simply for the purpose of stating the reasons for the vote which he was about to give in regard to this measure. The Bill made provision against accidents which arose through vehicles not being properly lighted. Upon the Second Reading they had only to deal with principles, and as the main principle of this Bill was to prevent accidents he should give his hearty support to the measure. It had been said that county councils and other public bodies already possessed the necessary powers for dealing with this danger by making by-laws, but he saw no reason why in such a matter as the protection of life and limb Parliament should not step in. He understood that there was an obligation placed upon motor-cars and cyclists to carry lights, and surely as regarded the question of cost the saving of the life and limb of a human being was worth a good many lamps. He appealed to the House to go to a division as soon as possible in view of the important questions which stood next on the Paper.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART (Renfrew, E.) supported the Bill. He had often been asked to support such a measure by a great body of his constitutents, and it was chiefly from the cyclists' point of view rather than from the motorists' point of view that he now spoke in favour of the Bill. He knew that the agricultural interest were opposed to the measure, but he thought farmers would not find the necessity of hanging one lamp on the off-side of their carts such a burden as they expected when they once got into the habit of doing so. He believed if this Bill were passed a cheap lamp would be put on the market which would be available for farmers, and therefore he did not attach much importance to the objection which had been stated to the measure on that score. But if the Bill were passed into law there would be no longer any excuse for motors to carry exaggerated lamps, and he thought if hon. Members who, like himself, were connected with the agricultural interest, supported the Bill it ought to be on the understanding that consideration would be given in Committee to the question whether there should not be some standard strength of lamp for motors beyond which it should be illegal to light them, because there was a great deal of danger in agricultural districts on account of motors going at a high speed at night with excessively glaring lights. Horses and the men driving them were for the moment dazzled, and he knew for a fact that accidents had happened from that cause. He hoped his hon. friend in charge of the Bill would think that suggestion worth considering.

There was another aspect of this matter from the agricultural point of view, namely, that districts such as Orkney and others represented by hon. Members who opposed the Bill, which were of an excessively rural character, might very reasonably be scheduled by county councils as districts containing roads on which there was no traffic but farm traffic. In Wigtonshire, Kircudbrightshire, and various rural parts of Scotland whole districts might be safely scheduled as districts where it would not be necessary that lights should be carried. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about uniformity?] He did not care about the question of uniformity. He was thinking of the safety of life and limb for those who used the roads. He was not speaking from the point of view of the motorists. If these suggestions were taken up and considered carefully in Committee he for one should be happy to support the Bill.

*SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) said he was very loth to place any impediment in the way of the legislative efforts of his hon. friend who had moved the Second Reading of the Bill, but when he proposed legislation which many of his constituents looked upon with something like horror then friendship must be put aside and public duty must take its place. His duty under the circumstances would be to oppose the Bill unless he had some assurance that it would not apply to Scotland. He had no doubt this would be a very useful Bill in connection with the suburbs of London, and also in the home counties adjoining the Metropolis, where perhaps 100 cars were passing every day for every one running on Scotch roads. The Bill if applied to Scotland would become an intolerable nuisance to farmers. For instance, if a farmer wished after sunset to take a cart of roots to his sheep he would require to carry lights, although only performing a necessary part of his business, for the public roads usually intersected farms. Then in the autumn when the harvest was going on it was frequently necessary late in the season for farmers to avail themselves of the opportunity to cart their grain in the moonlight. In that case they would require to have lights in front of and behind the cart. These, he thought, were perfectly unnecessary things. As had been pointed out by a previous speaker, if sheep were being taken along the public roads it would be necessary to have a man in front and another behind, each carrying a light, for if they were to have the Bill they must have regard to the danger caused by animals as well as vehicles. In Scotland they had the Burgh Police Act which regulated all questions about lighting within the boundaries of cities or burghs. Besides this the county councils had power to formulate regulations for the lighting of vehicles in the counties. The object of his hon. friend who moved the Second Reading was to make the law uniform all over the country. He believed the Bill would, if it created uniformity of the law, at any rate create a state of matters which, however desirable in one part of the country, was absolutely unnecessary in others. He thought the local people were the best judges of what should be done in the matter. If his hon. friend would give him an assurance that the Bill would not apply to Scotland he certainly should not oppose it any further, but if it was to apply to that country he should feel bound in the interest of his constituents to give it the strongest opposition he possibly could.

Sir MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said he rose to echo what had already been advanced by his compatriots in opposition to this Bill. It was a measure which would never go down with the people of Scotland. It no doubt had elements of good in it. He supposed everybody desired that lights should be carried by vehicles on the public highways. In the southern counties of Scotland, with which he was most familiar, they had very good by-laws which answered the purpose exceedingly well. They had not had those by-laws for a very long time, but if the House passed a drastic measure of this kind for the purpose of bringing about what was termed uniformity and punishing everybody alike, there would be a revulsion of feeling against the regulations and against the Bill. Therefore, if his hon. friend the Member for the Brentford Division really wanted to make progress with this measure he had better bring it forward in a few years time after the public had had a more ample opportunity of ascertaining what was really wanted, and especially in the counties of Scotland. If this Bill were passed it would involve an outlay which would be very hard on farmers who occupied land on both sides of the public roads. It would be necessary to have lights on carts after sunset; and in time of harvest it often happened that they returned to the farm houses many hours after sunset. They would be put to considerable inconvenience if they were obliged to carry lights in the way proposed. It was all very well for the hon. Member to say that it would only cost £2 a year. He had to drive many hundreds of miles every year through wild country, and he liked to have plenty of light on the vehicle, and also to see lights on approaching vehicles. As a rule that was attended to, and if it occasionally happened that there was a sleepy-headed fellow on a cart, he did not think that was a really good reason for proposing legislation of this kind. The hon. Member for Gainsborough had stated that he had not heard a single word said against the Bill. He himself knew perfectly well the feeling against the Bill on the part of his constituents. If the promoters of the Bill proceeded with it they would take the most unfair advantage of their constituents and of the country. If it were applied to counties with large areas, where motors were perhaps never seen, it would be most unjust. Very few of what were called "machines" were kept there at all—he meant vehicles on two wheels with springs. It was chiefly farm carts which would have to undergo the conditions imposed by this measure. To say that all these carts should carry lights was absurd. He was confident that the by-laws which had been enacted and which would continue to be enacted in the different counties were sufficient for the purpose, and, if they were not, they could be made to meet the requirements of the case. The motive of his hon. friend was a good one, but he had mistaken the feelings of the Scottish people.

*MR. BROOKE ROBINSON (Dudley) said there were others who were entitled to consideration as well as the agricultural interest—these were the owners of carriages, and certainly 70 per cent. of those used in London and 90 per cent. of those used in the country had not lamps of the peculiar character required in this Bill. There were probably 500,000 carriages in England, and as the cost of new lamps averaged £3 per lamp, he ventured to think that before the House imposed on the owners a charge which would amount to £750,000 in getting new lamps, they should have stronger reasons than had yet been advanced in favour of this Bill. He ventured also to strongly object to the view that a burden in respect to lights should be imposed on the farmers of England from which it was proposed to now exempt the farmers of Scotland.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) said hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on this Bill were, almost without exception, representatives of agricultural constituencies, and he desired to say a word from the point of view of those connected with large cities and industrial populations. From their point of view, so far as he had been able to obtain the opinion of the commercial community of Liverpool, they had no objection to the principle of the Bill. Every vehicle ought to be lighted in such a way as not to be a serious danger to other vehicles on the road, and if the Bill had been drafted in such a manner that it could have been adapted to every locality the objections stated that day would have been very largely minimised. It appeared to him that if the Bill was likely to gain success it should have been drawn in such a manner that it would have been left to localities to apply, or not apply, its provisions as they thought necessary. What was wanted was elasticity rather than uniformity in the law. A law might be simple, while at the same time extremely drastic. As to Liverpool, he might say that the cart-owners, who were a very large body, were strongly against the Bill because they thought it unnecessary, and because the city of Liverpool, like other large cities, was very well lighted by electricity and gas. There was no danger from vehicles being driven in well-lighted streets as compared with rural districts; secondly, they held that in a city like Liverpool there was no necessity for such regulations, at all events as regarded carts and lorries which proceeded at a walking pace.

The Corporation of Liverpool were entirely of the same view. A few years ago that corporation passed a by-law in which it was laid down that every vehicle passing along the streets during the night should have a light, except vehicles passing at a walking pace. But they exempted the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Estate. Here they had a large area set aside for working the loading and unloading of ships. They had docks, quays, and sheds, and there were roads communicating with these sheds to which the public had access. These sheds were filled with goods, many of them of a highly inflammable nature, such as cotton, oil, and hay. Now, if vehicles proceeding to these sheds carried lights there was the great danger of fire. A careless carter might, in lighting his lamp, throw a burning match somewhere among the goods. It was absurd to pass such a regulation as that lorries and carts going along these crowded thoroughfares should have to carry lights. Therefore, the Corporation of Liverpool, in the by-law to which he had referred, excepted entirely the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Estate.

He thought the promoters of this Bill were a little to blame for the manner in which they had received suggestions. They all knew the Bill was promoted by the Cyclists' Union, which was entitled to protection as much as anybody else. Though he had great sympathy with the Bill, and though he would be sorry to oppose it on principle, yet he thought the promoters should give the assurance that they would freely accept Amendments in Committee intended to preserve the rights of local authorities to adapt particular localities in the way they thought best; or, perhaps, better still, having regard to the numerous objections which had been stated, they should withdraw it on this occasion, in order that they might carefully consider the question of bringing it forward in an amended form in another year.

MR. LEVESON-GOWER (Sutherland) said he represented perhaps one of the most scattered constituencies in Scotland. Although he held that vehicles should be properly lighted, he thought that in the case of counties where only one cart might be found in forty miles of road it was not necessary to put in force the provisions of this Bill. He suggested that such counties should be exempted in the schedule. The real dangers which they had to guard against were those which were to be met with round towns. He believed that if local by-laws were properly carried out this Bill would be absolutely unnecessary. If the Bill were passed great injustice would be suffered in the rural districts where there was very little traffic on the roads.

MR. LABOUCHERE, who was received with cries of "Cochrane," said it was all very well to say "Cochrane," but this was a most important Bill.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said the hon. Member was in conspiracy with the Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE said he had not the slightest notion whether the Government were in favour of the Bill or against it. He thanked God that the hon. Member was not the Speaker or the Dictator of the House. He would pursue his course whether it pleased the hon. Member or not. He should take the liberty to speak on any Bill when he thought it desirable to lay his opinions before the House. He had observed that hon. Members who had spoken had commenced by dissociating themselves from any desire to prevent the discussion of the Bill that was to follow. He, therefore, desired also to dissociate himself from any such desire. The fact was that he held strong views both in regard to ladies and lights. He had given notice that he would move that the Women's Enfranchisement Bill be read that day six months, and in that way he had shown that he was desirous to lay his views before the House. At the same time the Bill now before the House was an important one, and they had duties to perform to their constituencies in fairly discussing it. Most of the debate had been carried on by Scotch Members, and he wished to congratulate Scotland. He had often wondered why Scotland was so much better governed than England. He believed it was because it had better representatives than England. Some o the Scotch Members had said that if Scotland were excluded from the Bill they would not take much interest in it. Other Scotchmen said that they did not take this local view of the matter, and that they would consider it their duty to oppose the Bill in the interest of England as well. A great many valuable grounds had been urged against the Bill by the Scotch Members. It seemed to him that their arguments were equally applicable to England, and he was really surprised that so few English Members had got up to oppose the Bill.

He had no doubt that the hon. Member for the Brentford Division was a most valuable member of the county council of Middlesex. It appeared that that county had already the rules which he wished to impose on other counties. The hon. Gentleman did not seem to perceive that what might be good for Middlesex was not necessarily good for the entire country. In Middlesex there was a vast amount of traffic, and, as there were carts coming at night to London with vegetables and other supplies, he could conceive that it was desirable to take special care to avoid collisions by having lights which would not be necessary in other parts of the country. The hon. Gentleman said he was in favour of uniformity. In the matter of regulations as to lights why was each county not to be able to judge for itself? The hon. Gentleman said there were some retrograde counties which would not follow the example of Middlesex. Let the hon. Gentleman rejoice that he was connected with Middlesex, which was not a retrograde county. There was too great a tendency on the part of Metropolitan Members to think that what was good for them was good for everyone else. He had not the slightest idea, because he was an inhabitant of London, of sacrificing the rights of his constituents who did not happen to be inhabitants of London. There were a great many counties where there was exceedingly little traffic, where motor-cars were very rare, and where there was no practical danger of an accident taking place. The Bill proposed that there should be lights on everything except a perambulator or a wheelbarrow. Why was a perambulator or a wheelbarrow to be run over? He wished it to be optional to the county council of each county to decide whether there should be lights on vehicles or not.

The real fact was that this Bill was brought in in the motor interest. All the leading men of the motor interest were in favour of it. It had been said that men who were driving carts went to sleep in the carts, but supposing a lamp went out the danger would be even greater. They were told that in voting for the Second Reading they were only voting for the principle of the Bill; but he contended that the principle on which the Bill was based was thoroughly unsound. The principle was—never mind local rights; think Imperially, centralise everything. He was opposed to that. The Bill attacked the very first principles of local government, and therefore he felt it his duty to vote against it. He had not had an opportunity of studying it greatly, but that was not his fault, because it had only been issued the day before. He had comforted himself, however, with the thought that the Bill was of such great importance that many Members would have discussed it at length and thrown greater light upon it than he could, on the theory that this was a question on which England expected every man to do his duty. Those who were supporting the Bill, he held, were overstepping their boundaries when they insisted on imposing their will on the whole of England.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) said that a great deal of the discussion had not been directed to the measure the Second Reading of which had been moved. He was afraid that the hon. Member who had last addressed the House, who professed to have a single eye to the present Bill, protested a little too much; and he had some slight suspicion of the same motive on the part of the hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): "Oh, ye of little faith."

*Mr. COCHRANE said that the hon. Member for Peckham had drawn a picture as to what would happen to him, if the Bill were passed into law, when returning from hunting—that it would be necessary to light up his horses, both before and behind. Such an exaggerated picture hardly commended itself to serious consideration. Then the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland burst into metaphors as to petticoats, cloven hoofs, and curly tails, which he mixed in the most extraordinary manner in one sentence. This was not a new question. It had often been before the Houe. As far back as the year 1897 a Bill was read a second time and it had been brought forward several times since. It was a question which affected all users of the roads and not merely motorists and cyclists. It had been recognised by the Legislature that that was the case, and various powers had been given in different parts of the country to make by-laws. No doubt if they could have reasonable uniformity it would be most desirable. But on this occasion he feared the question had not been considered quite on its merits. It had been overshadowed by the great motor question, which they all felt. No doubt motor-cars gave rise to a great deal of dissatisfaction. The unreasonable manner in which they were driven, the abominable dust which they raised, the ruin caused to suburban gardens, the alarm to people whose children were playing on the road owing to the way the motor chauffeur bustled past, all tended to affect the unprejudiced consideration of the present question. He desired to approach it from the point of view of public safety on the roads.

What most of them desired was that the roads should be made as secure as possible to all users, due regard being had to all reasonable interests on the roads. Now, a great number of accidents had occured on the roads long before motor-cars were ever heard of by reason of the absence of lights on vehicles or of their improper lighting. He had had sent to him a long list of accidents, but he could not vouch for its accuracy. In one case a mail-cart driver going into a dark avenue ran into a brewer's van and the drivers of both vehicles—neither of which was lighted—were seriously injured. And lest the temperance party should be induced to make too much of that case he would cite another in which three Wesleyan ministers driving in a cart ran into the horse attached to an approaching vehicle, the shaft of their cart piercing its breast and killing it. One hon. Member had declared that the roads were so dangerous now-a-days that he preferred to take his exercise along the railway lines for it was possible to tell when a train was approaching. But that was exaggeration to say the least of it.

Turning to the actual proposals of the Bill, he found that the drafting left considerable room for improvement. The proposal roughly was that all vehicles except wheelbarrows and perambulators should carry a white light in front and a red light in the rear. The requirement that there should be a red light in the rear of every vehicle was an entirely new one, and would require most careful consideration before any responsible Department would suggest that it should be universally adopted. The responsibility which was thrown on the driver not only to keep the lights burning, but to provide lamps, was also one that should not be placed upon him. In the definition clause the words "a vehicle with or without wheels" went somewhat far, and the requirement that the lights should be seen at a certain distance "if the weather be clear" would give rise to considerable difficulty. In these and other particulars the Bill fell short of what could be recommended to the House. The model by-laws issued from the Home Office to county councils which desired to put them in force, he thought, really provided the safeguards which were required. He would like to read them to the House. They were as follows—

"Every person who shall cause or permit any vehicle to be in any street or highway during the period between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise, shall provide the same with a lamp or lamps so constructed and capable of being so attached as when lighted to show to the front a white light visible within a reasonable distance to persons meeting or approaching the vehicle. If only one lamp is so provided, it shall be attached to the off or right side of the vehicle, and if the lamp or lamps are so constructed as to permit a light to be seen from the rear, that light shall be red."

"He shall also, if the vehicle is used for the purpose of carrying timber or any load projecting more than six feet to the rear, provide the same with a lamp or lamps so constructed and capable of being so attached as when lighted to show to the rear a red light visible within a reasonable distance to persons overtaking the vehicle."

"Every person driving or being in charge of such vehicle as aforesaid in any street or highway during such period as aforesaid shall keep such lamp or lamps properly trimmed, lighted, and attached."

"Any person offending against any of the foregoing bye-laws shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £5. There is no power to impose any higher penalty than this for a second offence, nor any daily penalty for a continuing offence."

As he had said, these model by-laws provided all the safeguards which were required. They had been largely adopted by county councils. They were not hard-and-fast regulations. They had been altered in different directions, but the variations, he acknowledged, sometimes led to difficulty and trouble. He repeated that he did think greater uniformity than they had at present was desirable.

His hon. friend the Member for West Renfrew had referred to a speech

Mr. Cochrane.

made at a meeting at Edinburgh by one of his own constituents. But there was another speech made by a farmer for an adjoining constituency (Ayrshire) in which attention was drawn to the inconvenience caused by the fact that in one county two lamps were required to each vehicle and in the other only one. Again, in one district a cart had to be lighted up an hour after sunset and in another two hours. He thought that if some uniformity could be arrived at on moderate lines it would be a great advantage. The County Councils Association had petitioned the Local Government Board to the effect that the time had come when legislation should be passed making it compulsory to carry lights on all vehicles. The need of uniformity was felt, and in sixty out of sixty-two counties in England the model by-laws had been adopted with some modifications, and in 223 out of 324 boroughs.

Objection had been taken to this Bill on the ground of inconvenience, expense, and risk of fire, especially in the case of carts carrying hay and similar loads. No doubt it was more or less inconvenient to carry out by-laws, but with regard to the risk of fire it had not been very marked in the cases where the by-laws were already in force. But there were one or two points which needed careful consideration. It would be admitted to be intolerable to compel a farmer, having fields on both sides of the road, to light a vehicle when merely moving it from one field to another. Scotland had been very fully represented in the discussion that day, and it would appear as if that country were backward in this matter. That, however, was far from being the case. The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1903, contained provisions similar to the model by-laws issued by the Home Office, and they had practically in all the burghs by-laws, restrictions, and regulations regarding the carrying of lights at least equal to, if not in advance of, those which obtained in this country. These had been compulsorily adopted in all but five burghs, two of which—Edinburgh and Dundee—had by-laws of their own far more stringent than any laid down in this Bill. His own county (Ayrshire) had indeed gone beyond what it seemed to some they were legally entitled to do, for they had placed an interpretation on Section 104 of the Roads and Bridges Act, 1878, which seemed almost like straining the law. In something like twenty-seven counties in Scotland there were by-laws in force; in only six there were none. In Ayrshire they had very good by-laws indeed, and he hoped that in time other counties would come up to their standard. He trusted his hon. friend would induce the Renfrew County Council to follow their lead.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW: We have precisely similar by-laws, except so far as there is a difference in the treatment of vehicles not on springs.

*MR. COCHRANE could not admit that Renfrewshire quite came up to the standard of Ayrshire in this matter. Still they need not indulge in any further internecine warfare. But he was prepared to admit that it might be extremely inconvenient to treat some parts of Scotland in the same way as Middlesex, and, therefore, if the hon. Member succeeded in getting the Second Reading of his Bill, he hoped he would make it clear that Scotland would not be included in the measure. He suggested further that if the hon. Member succeeded in getting the Second Reading, he should ask the House to send the Bill to a Select Committee, where evidence might be taken and the subject thoroughly threshed out. If he took that course, and was prepared to adopt Amendments as he had suggested, he might say the Government would take no hostile view of the measure, but as the Bill was at present drafted there were so many objections to it that he could not for the moment give it any more cordial support.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said it was eminently desirable that some uniformity should be introduced into our by-laws regarding the lighting of vehicles; he could conceive nothing more inconvenient than the existence of so many different systems. Local government was all very well and they all desired to encourage it; but there were things in which uniformity was a great deal better than variety. This was a difficulty which increased every year with the growth of population. Fifty years ago, when our roads were much less used than now, and when new villages and new towns did not spring up in every direction, this was not such a pressing question as at the present time, when our population was very rapidly increasing and our roads were being used more than ever, people even going back to them and not confining themselves to the railways. The question had become more urgent and the need for uniformity was greater than ever. He did not speak for the motorist, but on behalf of the humble cyclist. His experience was that the cyclist ran great danger not only from the rapid but also from the slow-moving vehicle; indeed, it was the slow-moving vehicle which was the greatest danger to him. He did not, therefore, think any Bill would be satisfactory which exempted the slow-going vehicle, though he thought they might, and he hoped the promoter of the Bill would, endeavour to meet the case of the farmer who used the road for say 100 yards—from one farm to another. He thought a real, substantial case had been made out for passing some such Bill; and he considered uniformity was needed in Scotland as well as in England, though it might be that the Scotch law ought to be considered by itself. He hoped the House would accept the Bill, and that, after every opportunity for amending it had been given, the Government would make every effort to pass it into law.

*MR. BIGWOOD said he was disposed to accept the offer of the Government, on condition that special facilities were given for the future progress of the Bill.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 108. (Division List No. 157.)

AYES.

Allen, Charles P.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brigg, John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Cheetham, John Frederick
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Crooks, William
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Delany, William
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Field, William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Garfit, William
Gilhooly, James
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Harrington, Timothy
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Higham, John Sharp
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Moss, Samuel
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Priestley, Arthur
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Ridley, S. Forde
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Rt Hn J Parker (Lanarks
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, Harold John
Thompson, Dr. E C (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Toulmin, George
Tully, Jasper
Turnour, Viscount
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Bigwood and Colonel Denny.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex.F.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bathurst, Hn. Allan Benjamin
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Boland, John
Bright, Allen Heywood
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Cautley, Henry Strother
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cullinan, J.
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Farrell, James Patrick
Fergusson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn. Sir J.(Manc'r
Ffrench, Peter
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flynn, James Christopher
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Joyce, Michael
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A.R.
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Fadden, Edward
Maxwell, W.J.H (Dumfriesshire
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Doherty, William
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P.J.
Parrott, William
Perks, Robert William
Rankin, Sir James
Reddy, M.
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Slack, John Bamford
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W H. (Yorks.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Cathcart Wason and Sir Herbert Maxwell.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*Mr. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, expressed his regret that the measure should have come on at so late an hour in the afternoon, and said that as a comparatively new Member he felt almost appalled at the extraordinary abuse of the forms of the House which that afternoon had been witnessed, manifestly and in some quarters avowedly with a view to preventing discussion of this Bill. A study of previous debates on the question of the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women had convinced him that no detailed argument in favour of the principle was necessary. The arguments of John Stuart Mill on Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill in 1867 were still unanswered and, in his opinion, they were unanswerable. The question was not one of Party, the principle having been supported by a majority of every Party in the House. The enfranchisement of women was a necessary factor in modern social progress, which had already been accepted by British colonies and which before long the mother country also would be compelled to accept. The principle had been discussed seventeen times in that House. In 1897 a Bill similar to the one under discussion was read a second time by a majority of seventy-one, while last year a Resolution affirming the principle was carried by a majority of 114. This week, *Punch*, that popular journal which generally had its finger upon the pulse of genuine public opinion, had put the case for this Bill in a nutshell, or rather in a cartoon, entitled "The Dignity of the Franchise."

The object of the Bill was to place women electorally in precisely the same position as men now occupied. The Bill would enfranchise women of every class, married and single, working women and women of leisure. It was certainly the intention of the promoters that it should enfranchise married women, and in Committee he would be glad, if necessary, to insert words, making this quite clear, providing that women should be enfranchised whether under coverture or not. The class chiefly concerned, however, were the working women of the country. The Bill embodied no new-fangled fancy franchise, but simply extended all existing franchises to women. It equalised the Parliamentary suffrage by admitting women as citizens on the same terms as men and abolishing the electoral disqualification of sex. It would enfranchise the great and numerous class of women occupiers. It had been ascertained that in the Bradley Ward of the Borough of Nelson more than 95 per cent. of the women voters now on the register were working women, while in Bolton the percentage was no less than 90, and out of 5,234 women voters now on the municipal register, and whom this Bill would add to the Parliamentary register, no fewer than 4,752 were working women. In St. Pancras, out of 5,231 women on the local register, 3,221 were working women. And in two wards of the city of Leeds 532 out of 536 and 1,100 out of 1,190 women voters were working women.

Fifty-three years ago Herbert Spencer wrote—

> "Equity knows no difference of sex. The law of equal freedom manifestly applies to the whole race, female as well as male,"

and that was just as good philosophy today as when first written. During the generation since Disraeli's Bill of 1867 there had been a great advance in public opinion on this question. Women could now vote for county, borough, and parish councils and boards of guardians, and a few weeks ago the House decided by a large majority that the women who were qualified to vote for those municipal bodies should also be qualified to be elected to them. It was these same women who under this Bill would be qualified to exercise the Parliamentary franchise. The national attitude had changed, but in this House the recent tendency had been retrograde and reactionary. Women had lost ground both as regarded educational and municipal administration. They were no longer qualified for direct election to the education authorities, nor were they eligible to sit on the London borough councils, which had taken the place of bodies for election to which they were previously elegible. These disqualifications would never have been imposed had the principle of this Bill been the law of the land. Women had no Parliamentary vote to protect the position they had gained, and in legislative assemblies unrepresented interests far too frequently went to the wall.

The test he would apply to this as to all other matters was simply, "Is it right?" and he held that few men could say from their conscience that it was not right to give to women the Parliamentary franchise. The disfranchisement of women was unconstitutional, inexpedient, mischievous, and unjust. It was wrong to force reasonable and responsible citizens to obey laws which had been enacted without the possibility of sanction or protest on their part. Women were excluded from the learned profession, ineligible for service on juries, and for the magistracy. Before the law women were prosecuted, defended, tried, and judged by men, and thus the door was opened to prejudice, error, and injustice. Give them the Parliamentary suffrage and the greatest of their grievances would be assuaged, their wrongs mitigated, and the injustice to a certain extent remedied, because they would have a voice in the constitution of the highest Court of the realm. In this House, by their own representatives, they could then voice their case. This Bill was framed as a reasonable measure—to extend the franchise to women on the same terms as to men. It was intended to enfranchise every woman, who if she had been a man would have had a vote, whether as owner, occupier, or lodger. The Bill was drawn on a sound and broad basis—sound, because it made no invidious legal distinctions between different classes

Mr. Slack.

of women, and broad because it took the existing basis in regard to men. It sought to establish the principle that now and always there should be precisely the same qualification for men and women, and that the future broadening of the vote which must come should carry women with it. The area covered by the Bill could not be usefully widened or narrowed; if it were on a different basis it would be open to the charge of introducing a fresh complication into our already over-complicated, antiquated, and discredited electoral system. Women asked for no privilege. They claimed a sacred and inviolable right which had been recognised by colony after colony with the best possible results. They begged no favour but a fair field for a great body of responsible citizens. They demanded bare justice, the redress of a great wrong, and the adjustment of a glaring inequality. Their claim was based on the eternal principles of liberty, equality, equity, and justice, and also of national morality and righteousness—principles to which this House could never for long consent to turn a deaf ear. The House had nothing to do with the consequences of a measure which simply sought to do justice. Withholding justice always led to public danger and discontent. He ventured to prophesy that the results of this measure if passed would be both beneficent and permanent, the bounds of freedom would be enlarged, and government would be more broadly based because based upon the will of all the people. He begged to move.

*SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) said he was glad to have the opportunity of seconding the Motion that this very modest Bill should be read a second time. That women who had the same qualifications as men should be placed on the Parliamentary register, and that sex should be no bar to the franchise, was a proposal which, in his opinion, was rendered both desirable and necessary by the modern conditions of industry, and by the development and extension of that commercial and industrial system on which the prosperity of this country rests. The position of female labour in many countries was such that woman was the servant of man, working for him, not as a free agent, but in a state of dependence upon him whether wives or daughters. In England at least women were free, going to their work as the equals, and, indeed, as the competitors of men, receiving their wages and disposing of them as they thought well. In many trades, where the handling of fine fabrics and the manipulation of delicate machinery was necessary, it was found that the labour of women was superior to that of men. Thus in the great development of manufacture, it had come about that female labour took a large share in the production of the national wealth, and the commercial prosperity of the country might be said to be largely dependent upon it. But while women took their places in industry side by side with men, their position was by no means the same. They complained that they were peculiarly subject to the exactions of the sweater, that they received lower wages than men even for the same work, and that, as regarded technical education, their needs were almost wholly disregarded. They were shut out from all schemes of industrial reform. This they attributed, and rightly so in his opinion, to political helplessness. All would recognise the great improvement in the condition of working men since the establishment of trades unions, and how, by combination, so much had been obtained for the benefit of working people, and probably all would agree that that improvement and that benefit would not have been secured, at any rate to the same extent, if the members of trades unions had not been endowed with the vote. And, now that women as much as men worked in their factories and workshops, now that they were in many cases the breadwinners, and in some cases the sole breadwinners, what argument was there for withholding from them the privileges of democracy which men enjoyed? While the foundation of their vast system of commerce rested so much upon female labour, while women shared so largely in the upkeep of the nation by the contribution of their labour to its trade, he submitted that no argument could be advanced in favour of sex remaining a disqualification for the franchise.

Many persons who were in favour of the franchise being given to women with a property qualification were opposed to this Bill. Personally, he took no interest in the extension of the franchise only to women with a property qualification. He did not believe that women with property cared in the least about the vote; to many it would be a luxury, to some even a nuisance, and Parliament need not trouble itself on account of those who were indifferent or were not pressing the matter forward. But women who worked for a weekly or daily wage did care about the vote; to them it would be not a luxury, but daily bread. He believed that inquiry had shown that 90 per cent. of the women who would go upon the register if this Bill passed would be working women. He understood that 7s. a week was the average wage of the working women of this country, and he remembered hearing it stated by a member of a deputation last year that she had worked ten hours a day welding chains for 5s. a week. These were the women who wanted the same chance in life as men, and while they did the same work and furnished so large a proportion of the labour supply of the country, there could be no reason why they should be denied political rights. It could not be to the interests of a commercial State which required for its sustenance a constant supply of well-fed and healthy labourers that cheap labour of this kind should be exacted from any section of its citizens. The question to-day was not how much or how little the franchise should be extended, but that in that franchise, whatever it was or might be, there should be equality, that one worker should not be denied what was given to another. He cared not what effect such a reform might have upon the balance of political Parties. A State, highly civilised and advancing in civilisation, conducting its internal economy on principles of equity and justice need have no fear of disturbance of political power.

He hoped the Bill would be read a second time. In any case, if those who opposed or supported the measure did so moderately and without prejudice, so satisfied was he with the arguments in its favour that he was certain the discussion would prove a step forward in the path of a reform for which the advancement of this country and its people would give ample justification. Their great commercial system was based upon the industry and intelligence of the people, and it might be said that the working people had the greatest stake of all in its maintenance and prosperity. Anything which injured that system, contracted its operations, or impaired its machinery, must be felt firstly and most severely by those who worked for daily or weekly wages. Consequently their stake in the prosperity of the country was a great one, and that so large a proportion of those who had this large stake should be kept out of political rights was a condition which, in his opinion, both needed and demanded alteration. The request for that alteration was now made, and he could assure the House there was intense energy and force behind it. In the past there had been great men in the Conservative Party who had not been slow to recognise the aspirations of democracy, nor to discern, even though from a distance, the operation of forces not, perhaps, visible at the top, but the strength and intensity of which were clearly to be seen below. There had been statesmen on their side, who, in response to that instinct, had been the first to initiate and to bring to maturity democratic changes in the constitution of this country. He hoped and believed that the species was not yet extinct; and he further hoped that the next great measure of electoral reform might come from their side and that it might embrace at least that modest extension of the franchise suggested in the Bill before the House and of which he was glad to have the opportunity of supporting the Second Reading.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton), in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said that reference had been made to the views of John Stuart Mill. It was true that he voted for Mr. Mill's Motion, but he did so with great hesitation, and certainly not because he regarded his arguments as unanswerable. He remembered asking Mr. Mill, at Mr. Bright's suggestion, whether he was really in favour of giving the franchise to all women or only to a few. It was only when Mr. Mill replied that he was in favour of giving it to a few that Mr. Bright was prepared to vote for women's suffrage. Therefore Mr. Mill, whose arguments had been referred to as unanswerable, would himself have been against this Bill. That was thirty-seven years ago, and in thirty-seven years one increased to a certain extent in experience. Every successive year since then had made him more and more regret the vote he then gave, and he had endeavoured to make up for it as a penance by opposing the Women's Franchise Bill tooth and nail ever since. He was entirely against female suffrage, and even if he were in its favour, he would, as a Radical and a democrat, oppose this Bill. After all, women were different from men physically and intellectually. We did not know how the difference had arisen. According to Darwin we all commenced from a single cell; the protoplasm by evolution became in some cases a man and in others a woman, and as a result of the processes in the laboratory of nature the sexes differed intellectually and physically. There were many physical tasks performed by men for which women were not fitted. They could not serve as soldiers.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are not a soldier.

MR. LABOUCHERE agreed, but he recognised that in every country in the last resort it was the business of every citizen of the country to go to its defence, and therefore he constituted one of the Reserves. Apparently, his hon. friend suggested that the franchise should be given to women because they could fulfil the duties of citizenship by turning out as soldiers after all the men had been destroyed. But that was not women's business; they could not do it; it must be recognised as one of their limitations. Neither could women act as policemen. Order and liberty, the social fabric, rested ultimately upon force, and the fact that women could not contribute to that force was a limitation of citizenship. The vote should be given only to those who could maintain a Government by force if necessary, provided, of course, it was a sound Government, but women could neither defend a good Government nor upset a bad one. It was the same in industrial life. As civilisation increased, the hard manual work was taken out of the hands of women. In this country the law had interfered to prevent women from doing men's work. He thought, therefore, it might fairly be said that women could not fulfil the duties of citizenship. Of course, it was not their fault that they were more beautiful than muscular.

There was also a difference between women and men in mental equipment. In some things they were superior to men, but in other things men were very much their superiors. During the first years at school girls outstripped boys, but after a certain age the boys more than overtook the girls. In domestic matters women were much more useful and understood them better than men, and in certain little trades in which women engaged they might be able to give points to men. But in the consideration of the great problems which came before the Imperial Parliament they were certainly inferior intellectually to men. There were doubtless exceptions, but he was speaking of the sex as a whole. Women were nervous, emotional, and had very little sense of proportion. Every man knew what it was to argue with a woman. He had given it up. A woman would lay down her views, and though it were conclusively proved to her that she was wrong, she would continue stolidly to repeat her old arguments. But whence did she get her opinions and conclusions? Very often from someone who had influence over her.

Considering the nature of this great Parliament and what its duties were he was convinced that women, fitted as they were for many things, were not fitted to have votes. It was said that women were entitled to the franchise as a right. But the giving of votes must depend upon whether it was an advantage to the community, and it would be a great disadvantage to the community to give women votes. It would also be injurious to women themselves. It was said also that the argument against women being unfit for the franchise was disproved by the fact that this country had an excellent Queen for many years. But it must be remembered that the Queen could only act on the advice of her Ministers, and in his opinion it would be easier for a woman to act as Queen than to act as a simple voter. Women exercised a great influence over men, and they desired to retain that influence. The laws of nations had been largely shaped by women, although women had no hand directly in the making of the laws. This influence would be lost to women if they had votes, and that was the reason why the vast majority of women did not desire the franchise. In fact, women had at present such an influence over the actions of men that if they had been really united in the desire for the franchise they would have got it long ago. It was only a few women with masculine minds who took an interest in politics and desired to have votes in order that they might enter the political arena. This matter must be considered from a broad point of view. Whatever the Bill might say, the admitted object of the promoters was to put men and women in a position of absolute equality in the matter of the franchise, to break down the barrier of sex, and to give women the vote precisely as it was now given to men. What would that mean? Somehow or other there were more females than males born, and at the time of a general election there were always more men than women absent from the country. Therefore, as there were more women than men in the country, if the female franchise was established it would mean the absolute abnegation of the rights of men, and the surrender of the whole government of the country to women. It was true that on ordinary questions women would not all act together; they would be split up into Parties; but when it came to a question of the interest of women *versus* the interest of men they would be absolutely united against the male portion of the community. It was, therefore, absolutely dangerous. Women would want to sit in Parliament. Whether his hon. friend was in favour of that or not ——

*Mr. SLACK: I am not in favour of assisting you to talk it out.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Talking it out! Was it really supposed that a measure of this tremendous importance could be voted upon after a discussion of two hours? No, it was not a question of talking it out; he was trying to convert his hon. friend. But whether his hon. friend was in favour of it or not, it would matter very little if women were given votes, as the right to sit in the House could not then logically be denied.

Now, would it really be desirable to turn this venerable and respectable Parliament into an arena with a promiscuity of sexes? He thought it would be most undesirable. There were young men there. He had seen in the lobbies all sorts of political flirtations going on to get their vote. As an old man he could not conscientiously countenance placing them or anybody else in the hands of those ladies. He had had cards sent in to himself, and gentlemen had come to him and said, "The ladies want to see you." Well, he was cautious. He remembered the intelligent Ulysses closed his ears not to hear the sirens; and so he did not go to those ladies. If he had gone—man was weak—he might have been cajoled and humbugged into taking their part and voting for this measure. No, it was really not safe. That was the view taken in all other matters. Boys and girls were not now taught together; it was recognised that the education for the one was not exactly suited to the requirements of the other sex. Would anybody suggest that there should be juries of women?

["Certainly."] Mixed juries? ["No."] They would not go so far as that; even they drew the line there! The general opinion was that the administration of justice would not gain by having jurywomen instead of jurymen. Men were calmer and more likely to give a fair verdict. Would his hon. friend suggest that there should be women Judges and women advocates?

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): All we want is freedom.

MR. LABOUCHERE said that was what he wanted. He wanted freedom for men. He was not going to be crushed under the dominion of women. He was a follower of John Knox, who wrote of "the horrible regiment of women." He went further; he was a successor of St. Paul. St. Paul objected to women talking in churches. Apparently the church was then the place where discussions were carried on. Take the Church now. Were Archbishops women? He admitted that many working women did not get fair treatment in the matter of wages, but to give them votes would not raise their wage by one shilling. How was it that men had obtained better wages? Not by legislation, but through their trade unions, and those who desired to improve women's wages would do better to go and preach trade unionism to the women workers than to endeavour to secure them a barren vote which would do them no good at all. If his hon. friends would promote legislation to secure to women a minimum wage he would heartily support them. But even if he were in favour of women's suffrage, as a Radical and a democrat he would oppose this Bill. Under the Bill as it stood, only propertied women, lodger spinsters, and female servants would get votes. If a woman married she would lose her vote.

*__MR. SLACK__: The hon. Member is entirely inaccurate.

MR. LABOUCHERE suggested that the hon. Member should read the Bill for himself. If it passed without modification marriage would be practically penalised. He would never accept what he did not think was an honest Bill. There was a deliberate attempt in the present measure to get in the thin end of the wedge. Women might be useful members upon subordinate local boards, for they had capacity for administrative work, and that work affected both sexes, but could not his hon. friend appreciate the vast difference between a board of guardians or a school board and the great Imperial Parliament? The Bill was thoroughly undemocratic and opposed to the most elementary principles of Radicalism. Votes in favour of women's suffrage had increased, it was said, and possibly that was so. Men were very weak in regard to women. Ladies came to them and adjured them to support the cause, and promised in return to canvas for the candidate, who in the belief that the movement would never come to a head weakly gave a promise. A vast number of Gentlemen had incautiously made such promises, and were anxious to avoid the fulfilment of their obligations. ["Oh."] Yes, they were glad the Bill came on for discussion too late for a division. He did not shirk the expression of his views in opposition to the Bill. An important Bill came on dealing with a matter on which he had a strong opinion, and it was supposed that discussion should be restricted under pain of being accused of a desire to talk out women's suffrage. But let supporters of this Bill understand that they could not have it both ways, and if women came into political life they must accept the conditions equally with men. The polite deference to women in drawing-rooms did not obtain in politics, but it was supposed, perhaps, that if ladies had seats in the House male Members would yield them precedence in speaking, though a man might hold strong views, as he did, on the question of vehicle lights. To give the franchise to women would destroy the best relation between the sexes. Think of a married man after having heard speeches maundering on all the evening having to go over the whole again with his wife and daughters. They might be on opposite sides, and it would mean the destruction of the social relations that had existed from time immemorial. Those who were Radicals should vote against the Bill, even if they were in favour of women's suffrage, because it was not a Radical and democratic Bill, and Conservatives should not be induced to support it by the limitations attached, for they might be assured that if once a certain number were admitted to the franchise every woman in the country would soon be clamouring not only for votes but for the right to sit in the House.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) said that he for once was in full agreement with the hon. Member for Northampton. When men exercised their Parliamentary franchise they were creating the great body with whom ultimately must rest not only the making, but the enforcement of the laws. It might be perfectly possible that in certain constituencies the votes of women under the Bill might be in the majority, and as the undoubted desire of the promoters of the Bill was to extend it to all women, in the end that majority would be probable in all constituencies. To carry out the principle logically both husband and wife would have to have the vote. Supposing a House consisting to a large extent of Members elected by the votes of women passed a law to which men as a whole objected, did hon. Members suppose that it would be possible to enforce that law? They could not force men's obedience to laws passed by the influence of a majority of women, contrary to the opinion of men on whose power the final sanction of the law rested. Something like a revolution would result. They would have dissociated the real from the nominal power of the country. The real sanction of any law at present was that it was backed by the power of the men who passed it, and by allowing women to come in, and in certain circumstances to control the election of Members to Parliament, they would vest the creation of the legislative power in one body, while the sanction for the maintenance of the laws passed by the Legislature was vested in another body. The agitation now experienced in consequence of the passing of the Education Act would be nothing compared to that which would follow an Act framed on the demands of women contrary to the wishes of men. Nothing but another Bill restraining the power of election and bringing the power back to its real source of origin would be able to set the matter right.

His information as to the opinion of the colonies, where women had received votes, regarding the success of that change did not agree with that given to the House that day. On the contrary, he was informed that the colonies were seriously dissatisfied with the result, and that there was a desire to repeal that legislation. In canvassing for county council elections he had been struck by a general failure on the part of women voters to take a broad or all-round view of a question. In almost every case they fixed upon some minor detail, and refused to consider anything else. That was not the spirit in which it was desirable to conduct elections to that House. Men did not regard matters in that light at a general election, though they might at a by-election. The hon. Member for Leicester described the Bill as a modest measure. Any adjective less appropriate it would be difficult to find. It was distinctly the most ambitious Bill in this direction ever brought before Parliament. He cordially agreed with the hon. Member for Leicester that women of property did not care about the vote and that it would be a nuisance to them. The vast bulk of women did not desire the franchise.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON: I entirely dissent.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said he was speaking from his own experience. Although he had made long inquiry he had been unable to find any desire in this direction among either property owners or any other class. The hon. Member for St. Albans had urged that John Stuart Mill's opinions ought to be sufficient to induce Members to support this Bill. But John Stuart Mill would not have been in favour of such a Bill, as his Motion undoubtedly had reference to propertied people.

*MR. SLACK: Mr. John Stuart Mill proposed exactly what I propose to-day, viz., to read the word "person" for "man" in the Reform Bill of 1867, and that would have enfranchised every woman that my Bill seeks to enfranchise.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said that, at any rate, that was some years ago, and public interest in the question, however strong it might have been at the time referred to, was not so strong now.

*MR. SLACK rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Deputy-Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said that for the hon. Member to say that no one could conscientiously refuse to support the Bill appeared to be a parody of the whole situation.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Whereupon MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-six minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 15*th May*, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) [H.L]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) [H.L.].

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Whitechapel and Bow Railway; Great Western Railway (New Railways); Aylesbury Gas; Ealing Corporation; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas; Great Western Railway (Additional Powers); Halifax Corporation; Stockport Corporation; Bristol Corporation; Croydon Corporation; Heckmondwike Improvement; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company; Aberdare Urban District Council; Colne Corporation; Swansea Corporation. The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. Petition for additional provision; of the British Electric Traction Company, Limited, and of the Rushden Urban District Council, together with the proposed Amendments annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 6th of April and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned this day at One o'clock.

Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment. The said Amendment considered, and agreed to.

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Morley Corporation Bill; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Hare (*E. Listowel*) be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Ridley; read, and agreed to.

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord De Mauley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Denman; read, and agreed to.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE WITH SIBERIA.

Report on the condition and prospects of British trade in Siberia by H. Cooke, Special Commissioner of the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade.

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3371. Honduras (Truxillo).

No. 3372. China (Kiungchow).

No. 3373. China (Chinkiang).

No. 3374. Persia (Kerman).

INDIA (FOREST SERVICE).

Correspondence relating to the training of forestry students.

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report for December, 1904.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Code of regulations for continuation classes providing further instruction for those who have left school, 1905.

Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1904–1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (on Re-commitment) (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved the insertion of a proviso at the end of Clause 2, the effect of which was, he said, to provide a time limit for advertisements now in existence, so that if and when the Bill became law those who had advertisements already up should have a certain period of grace before the local authority could order their removal.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, at end of clause to insert the words, 'Provided that a local authority in making by-laws under this section shall provide for the exemption from the operation of such by-laws of any hoardings and similar structures in use for advertising purposes, and of any advertisements exhibited at the time of the making of the by-laws, for such period, not being less than twelve months, as they may think fit."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

LORD BELPER: I may say that there is no objection on the part of the Government to this or to the other Amendments standing on the Paper in the name of Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said that the object of the Amendment standing in his name was to check a very mischievous and annoying practice, and one which was becoming more common, especially in the neighbourhood of towns. People armed with advertisements or stamps travelled all over the country and fixed announcements to trees, gates, walls, and other property referring to somebody's boots or corsets, and these advertisements constituted a serious nuisance. It was very desirable that the practice should be stopped, or at all events checked. He knew a case in Scotland in which a county council passed a by-law for this purpose, but it was held that the by-law was beyond the power of the county council. He therefore hoped the Government would accept his new sub-section.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, line 16, after the word 'landscape' to insert as a new sub-section the words: (3) For preventing the affixing or otherwise exhibiting advertisements upon any wall, tree, fence, gate, or elsewhere on private property, without the consent of either the owner or the occupier previously given in writing."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD BELPER: The view of the Home Office with regard to this Amendment is that, although in itself it is a very desirable one, it is not necessary, because the power already exists. In the case of London there is a provision in the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, dealing with this particular case, and declaring it to be an offence for any person, without the consent of the owner or occupier, to fix any bill or other paper against any fence or wall. The law with regard to county council and borough areas is somewhat different. There is power to make by-laws under the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, and also under the Local Government Act, 1888, and by-laws are constantly made for this particular purpose. A model by-law has been approved by the Home Office which provides that—

"No person shall affix or cause to be affixed any placard upon any building, wall, fence, gate, door, pillar, tree, or post in or abutting on any public street or place, without the permission of the owner or occupier, unless authorised so to do by law."

I am not authorised to speak on the case of Scotland. I do not represent the Scottish Office and have no means of knowing whether the law is different in Scotland; but as regards England the view of the Home Office is that the Amendment is unnecessary, as the power already exists.

LORD HENEAGE did not think the model by-law which the noble Lord who represented the Home Office had just read would cover country districts, because it contained the words—

"In or abutting on any public street or place."

The object which Lord Camperdown had in view, and with which he (Lord Heneage) cordially agreed, was to put a stop to men going about with paste pots and posting advertisements on gates in open fields and elsewhere, not necessarily in or abutting on a public place. Only the other day he saw a horse shy at one of these large advertisements. He (Lord Heneage) also objected to the small bills, many of which were not nice reading.

LORD BRAYE reminded the House that the Indecent Advertisements Act of 1888 rendered a great number of these advertisements indictable, and that within a year of the passing of the Act the gate posts in the country—at any rate in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire—were cleared of objectionable bills. He hoped the noble Earl would press his Amendment, because it went a little further still, and would, he hoped, have the effect of clearing the country of every kind of advertisement which could in any way be spoken of as objectionable.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said that, so far as he was personally concerned, the object of Lord Camperdown had his cordial sympathy. If the class of offence in question was not prohibited under the existing law, he would be glad to see his Bill made the machinery for putting an effective prohibition upon it. But, in view of the statement of the noble Lord representing the Home Office, he suggested that Lord Camperdown should postpone his Amendment at this stage, so that in the meantime they might see exactly how the matter stood and make absolutely certain whether there was an existing power sufficient to meet the difficulty.

LORD BELPER: I have not the slightest objection to that course. I believe the object of the Amendment is already met, but if it is not we can deal with it in Standing Committee.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said his Amendment proposed to deal, not merely with indecent advertisements, but with advertisements of all kinds. No doubt in England the law was as stated by Lord Belper, but the objectionable practice in question had not been stopped under it. It seemed to him desirable that where the advertisement was an indecent one the offender should not merely be punishable on indictment but summarily. It had been decided by the Courts that county councils in Scotland, at all events, had no power to make by-laws to stop this nuisance, and, whilst he was willing to accede to the course suggested, he thought the evil was one which ought to be dealt with when they had a Bill of this kind before them.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3.

LORD MONKSWELL said he desired to move an Amendment to this clause which was not on the Paper, but which he had mentioned to the noble Lord in charge of the Bill, and to which neither Lord Balfour nor His Majesty's Government had any objection. Some persons had doubted whether the Bill might not derogate from the powers that local authorities now possessed of making by-laws; whether it might not be held that the by-laws made under this Bill were in substitution for those already in force; and in order to make the matter perfectly clear he moved his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"At end of Clause 3, to insert the words, 'Provided always that the powers conferred by this Act shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of, any other powers of making by-laws possessed by any local authority.'"—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said that personally he had no objection to this Amendment. He thought it reasonable, because in urban districts such as the county of London there were stringent powers which were not appropriate to rural districts. The Amendment merely safeguarded those stringent powers where they existed.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said the Amendment which he now moved had been suggested by the Irish Government, and was to make it quite clear that a certain rate in Ireland would be applicable to defraying expenses if any were incurred under the Bill.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 12, to leave out the word 'and,' and after the word 'Wales' to insert the words 'or Ireland.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved an Amendment to provide that in the case of the city of London the expenses should be defrayed out of the consolidated rate. He believed the Amendment was agreed to by everybody concerned.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 14, after the word 'fund,' to insert the words, 'in the case of the city of London out of the consolidated rate of that city and.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Monkswell.

Consequential Amendments agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH explained that there was a clause in the original draft of the Bill applying it to Scotland, but in the changes agreed upon between the Home Office and himself, and which were given effect to by the House at the previous stage, the application of the Act to Scotland was accidentally dropped out. He begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 4, to insert as a new clause the words: '(1) In the application of this Act to Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland shall be substituted for the Secretary of State. (2) The town council of a burgh to which Section 77 of the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1903, applies, shall not have power to make by-laws for the regulation and control of hoardings and similar structures in terms of this Act. (3) By-laws made by a county council shall not be of any force or effect within a Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh. (4) The section of this Act relating to expenses shall apply to Scotland with the substitution of 'general purposes rate' for 'county fund' 'Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh' for 'borough' and 'burgh general or police assessment' for 'borough fund or borough rate.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, new clause agreed to.

Clause 5.

Consequential Amendments agreed to.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said that the new clause applying the Act to Ireland had been suggested and drafted by the Irish Government.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 5, to insert as a new clause the words: 'In the application of this Act to Ireland the Lord-Lieutenant, acting with the advice of the Privy Council, shall be substituted for the Secretary of State.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

Remaining clause agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended (No. 73.)

NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDALS BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, this Bill is exactly the same as the Bill which passed through all its stages in your Lordships' House last year, and therefore I do not propose to explain it at any length. The case for the Bill is this. Eleven years ago legislation was passed carrying certain penalties for wrongful use of the King's uniform. We wish to apply the same conditions to the wrongful wearing of medals. We have had cases of men wearing medals to which they were not entitled and using them as a means of obtaining employment, and we propose a penalty for such an offence. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I desire to say a word or two before this Bill is read a second time. The Bill only refers to medals granted to members of His Majesty's Naval and Military Forces. His Majesty was graciously pleased to grant a medal to the officers of the merchant service, in recognition of the valuable work done by them during the South African War, and I would ask my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he could not see his way, when the Bill goes into Committee, to insert an Amendment which would include the medals of officer sof the merchant service. Some of those officers have the ordinary war medals which, I believe, are covered by this Bill, but the special transport medal granted to them is not so covered. I trust that my noble friend will prepare an Amendment meeting this point before the Committee stage is taken.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I shall be very glad to look into the point raised by the noble Lord.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next

INDENTURED IMMIGRANT LABOURERS IN THE COLONIES.

LORD STANMORE, who had given notice of his intention to move for a copy of a despatch from Earl Grey to Sir William Gomm, Governor of Mauritius, No. 38 of 1846, and for a Return, in a comparative form, of the Laws, Ordinances, and Regulations affecting the introduction and employment of Indentured Immigrant Labourers in His Majesty's Colonial Possessions (1) as existing in 1885; (2) as now existing, said: My Lords, I have felt and feel some embarrassment with regard to the Motion which stands in my name on the Paper to-day. That embarrassment is due to the fact that another Motion, also relating to coloured indentured immigrants, is to be brought before your Lordships for discussion to-morrow. It is true that the two Motions are not at all similar, either in their scope or in their object. The scope of mine is a much wider one than that of the noble Lord who has given the notice for to-morrow (Lord Coleridge), for the scope of mine includes the whole of the question of the legislation with regard to coloured immigration in all the Colonies. His Motion refers only to the introduction of a particular class of coolie into one particular colony. His object is understood to be to convey a censure on the Government for the action which they have permitted or enjoined; mine does not convey any censure upon any one, neither upon the Government nor upon private individuals, but merely desires to call public attention to one of those curious fluctuations of public opinion which from time to time occur. But though our Motions are not identical, either in scope or object, it is impossible to deny that to a certain extent the two Motions do overlap one another, and that some of the arguments and facts which would be quoted in the one would necessarily be, if not quoted, alluded to in the other. That, under ordinary circumstances, would not greatly matter; at least it would not greatly matter if the two discussions were separated from one another by any considerable interval; but through a series of circumstances not entirely due to myself the two Motions are now down for two consecutive days, and I think if I were now to go into my Motion it would be impossible to prevent, to some extent, the discussion which must take place to-morrow being forestalled. It would be very difficult, although it is not my Motion, although it is not what I wish chiefly to dwell on, to keep out of sight the Chinese coolie question, which must necessarily form a part of it. I have, therefore, though somewhat reluctantly, come to the conclusion that I should best consult your Lordships' convenience, and also show that consideration to the noble and learned Lord to which he is entitled, if I withdraw the Motion standing in my name. Lord Coleridge gave his notice before mine, and, therefore, has a certain priority. I have no wish to poach upon another man's preserves, and my Motion, though, I think, not less important than that of the noble and learned Lord, is one which can wait. There is no immediate necessity for calling attention to this curious change of feeling in the public mind. My noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies need not laugh, because I can assure him I intend to return to the charge before long. Of course I cannot bring forward the same Motion again, but I shall bring up the same subject by another Motion at a decent interval after the discussion of to-morrow. I beg, with the permission of the House, to withdraw the Motion standing in my name.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

DEFENCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS rose to move, "That the Duke of Wellington's letter to Sir John Burgoyne in 1847 on our defenceless state be printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper." He said: My Lords, I do not wish to raise on this Motion the general question of our defences. I hope to raise that question on another Motion, of which I have given notice, and which is in the following terms—

> "To move to resolve, That, in the opinion of this House, it would be a danger to the Realm, and limit the power of the Navy as an offensive force in war, to trust to it alone for home defence, and, inasmuch as it is admitted that the Navy cannot guarantee us against so-called hostile 'raids,' it is the more needful that our land defences should at all times be such that no nation would ever attempt in any form a hostile landing on our shores."

I desire the publication of the Duke of Wellington's letter because I think it is a letter of considerable importance, for it deals with the safety of our hearths and homes—the most vital question that could be brought before us. There are extracts from the letter in *The Times* this morning, and I will not trouble your Lordships by reading it. I think that if the Duke of Wellington were now alive he would probably be a member of the new Defence Committee, and, if he were the Prime Minister would not, I am sure, have made the speech that he delivered on Thursday last. My only object is that your Lordships should see this letter, which a great many people have never read. Full knowledge is wanted on this in the interests of the nation, it is on this vital question of home defence; and it is desirable to publish all the information on both sides of the question that can be obtained. What the Government will do with regard to this Motion I do not know. They may or may not refuse it. I hope they will not. I appeal to the noble Marquess the Leader of the Government in your Lordships' House to accept it. This is not a War Office question; it is an Imperial question. The War Office has no more to do with it than any other Department. It is a national question; and, in the interests of the nation, I hope my request will be acceded to.

Moved, "That the Duke of Wellington's letter to Sir John Burgoyne in 1847 on our defenceless state be printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, I can assure the noble Earl, in answering this Question, that I wish he had been provided with a foeman worthy of his steel. I will, however, do my best to reply to the simple Question he has put to me. I say at once that I hope the noble Earl will not press his Motion. This letter cannot be characterised as a public document; it is a private letter.

The Earl of WEMYSS: I want it to be a public document.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: That is what I object to, unless the noble Earl has the Duke of Wellington's consent.

*The Earl of WEMYSS: Where am I to go for it?

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: This document has already been published a great many times. The earliest reference to it that I have been able to find is in a newspaper called the *Morning Chronicle*, in which this letter appeared on January 4th, 1848. A very full *précis* is also published in Sir Herbert Maxwell's "Life of the Duke of Wellington," in the second volume, page 361. That book, I have ascertained, is in the library of your Lordships' House. The letter was also published in Colonel Wrottesley's "Life of Sir John Burgoyne," in the first volume, page 444, and Colonel Wrottesley states there that it had frequently appeared in print. Therefore, the letter is available to everyone who wants to read it in studying this question. I think the letter is a good deal better known than the noble Earl seems to suppose. I have had occasion several times during the last few weeks to mention the letter to officers with whom I have the privilege of being associated at the War Office, and they all seem perfectly familiar with it. It was a letter which was not approved of by everybody when it was originally published. There were some speeches of Mr. Cobden which were very bitter in their comments upon it, showing considerable disagreement with the views put forward. Moreover, the letter can scarcely be considered to be up to date. It is, as I have said, at the disposal of anyone who desires to study this question, and I do not think any useful purpose would be served in printing and circulating it as a Parliamentary Paper. I hope the noble Earl will not press his Motion.

The Duke of RUTLAND: My Lords, I beg leave to second the advice given to my noble friend by the noble Lord who has just spoken, but on, perhaps, a different ground. My recollection is that this letter of the illustrious Duke was written without any intention of its being published, and that it was published, if I may say so, surreptitiously, greatly to the annoyance of the illustrious writer. In these circumstances, unless some great public good is to be gained by publishing it, I do not think His Majesty's Government would be acting quite rightly if they were to give, as it were, an official stamp, not only to the letter, but also to the manner in which the letter was first published. I think it would be much better that this House should not mix itself up with the publication of the letter in question, and that it should be allowed to remain where it is, available to everybody who cares to read it, but without the official stamp of His Majesty's Government.

*The Earl of WEMYSS: My Lords, what my noble friend the noble Duke has just said is rather counter to the view of the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War, for he has told us that everybody knows all about this letter. But to know it you must buy a *Morning Chronicle* of January 4, 1848, and get a number of books referred to by the noble Earl. I want the public to have this letter without that trouble, and I think my noble friend is a little over-delicate about the Government's sanctioning the publication of a letter which was not intended to be published. I suspect there is something behind this, and that the Government do not wish the noble Duke's argument to be put in your Lordships' hands. That is my belief; I may be wrong. I shall not, however, trouble your Lordships to divide, for I have the remedy in my own hands. I am quite prepared to say that I shall print this letter myself, and send it to every Member of your Lordships' House and the other House of Parliament and to the Press. I hope your Lordships will read the letter, and I also commend to your attention, in relation to the subject of Imperial defence and Mr. Balfour's speech, the article in *The Times* of to-day by a military officer and the able leader and important correspondence in the *Morning Post.* The noble Earl the Under-Secretary has alluded to the Duke of Wellington's letter as being out of date, but that cannot be so long as the shores of England remain unchanged. The Duke of Wellington said he had made a careful study of the subject, and that from the North Foreland to Portsmouth there was not a spot on the coast where infantry might not land, and there were several small harbours where cavalry, artillery, and stores could be landed. Therefore, to make this letter out of date you must prove that the shores of the South of England have changed. Be that as it may, I have served my purpose in calling your Lordships' attention to this preparatory to the Motion which I shall bring forward later. I think the motto, *Audi alteram partem*, is one which it would be well for the Government to adopt in regard to this subject.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I only wish to point out that there is really no difference between the argument used by the noble Lord who represents the War Office and the argument which was put with so much authority by the noble Duke on the Back Bench. My noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for War pointed out that the letter was a private letter, and upon that ground he objected to a publication which would give to it the appearance and character of an official Parliamentary Paper. That was also the argument of the noble Duke, and this view is supported by an extract from a subsequent letter, published in *The Times* of to-day, in which the Duke of Wellington described the letter which we are now discussing as a "confidential letter from the Commander-in-Chief." We feel, therefore, that we have no right to convert that confidential letter into a Parliamentary document. The noble Earl who moved the Motion now before the House twitted my noble friend behind me upon his description of the letter as "out of date," and replied that the shores of England had remained unchanged since the letter was written. I have myself some doubt on that point, for certain parts of the coast alter very rapidly indeed. But, be that as it may, surely the noble Earl must admit that the means of offence and defence have considerably altered since the time of Wellington, and if it were possible to recall the illustrious Duke to life and give him a place on the Defence Committee it might well be supposed that he would give serious study to the modifications which the art of war had undergone since he had taken part in the application of its principles to the defence of this country. I am afraid we must adhere to our resolve and leave the noble Earl to fall back on his own method for making the letter known.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I hope my doing so will not be considered in any way a breach of confidence.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I merely rise to quote what the view of the Duke of Wellington himself was with regard to the publication of this letter. As the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War stated, the letter was published on January 4th, 1848, and on the 30th of the same month the illustrious Duke, in a letter written to Lady Shelley, took exception to the publication, and expressed his views on the subject very strongly. If I may, I will quote a portion of his letter, and I think it will show conclusively that the illustrious Duke would neither have desired that this subject should be raised in your Lordships' House, nor that his letter should be published. The Duke wrote—

> "My opinion is, and has been, that the subject would be considered with advantage by the Government alone in the first instance. The rules of procedure so require. It is quite certain that the House of Lords, of which I am a member, is the place where it would be of the least advantage to suggest the discussion of such a subject. It is well known that in the last session of Parliament a discussion did take place in the House of Lords on the state of the defences of the country. Lord Ellenborough spoke, others spoke; I did not say one word. I object to a movement of the kind on the part of any but servants of the Crown, and I declared I would not move in it."

I think that is strong evidence of what the wishes of the Duke of Wellington would be if he were here, and I venture to quote it in support of what has been said on behalf of His Majesty's Government.

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, I cannot refrain from expressing surprise that the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War has quoted Mr. Cobden in order to bolster up his argument. I confess that is the last authority I should have expected to hear quoted from the Front Bench, for of all prophets he was, I imagined, regarded by noble Lords on that bench as being the most discredited. But I should like to remind the House, and my noble friend in particular, that one of Mr. Cobden's prophecies was that, if we were involved in a European war, the country would be obliged to resort to the principle of universal service. I think that is a prophecy more likely to be fulfilled than others made by that statesman.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I did not quote Mr. Cobden to buttress up my argument. I quoted Mr. Cobden's having made a speech as evidence of a certain feeling in a certain section of opinion in the country, which is a very different thing.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 15th *May*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the first Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords]; Truro Water Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

London County Council (Money) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. To be read a second time to-morrow.

London Government Scheme (London and Middlesex) Bill, "To confirm a Scheme made under The London Government Act, 1899, relating to the counties of London and Middlesex," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Wodehouse; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 212.]

London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill. "To confirm a Scheme made under The London Government Act, 1899, relating to the Hackney and Edmonton Unions," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Wodehouse; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 213.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional orders of the Local Government Board relating to Liverpool and Poole and the counties of Essex and Hertford," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 214.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill, "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Briton Ferry, Clifton, Dartmouth, Hardness, Horsforth, and Teignmouth," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 215.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Acton, Bradford (Yorkshire), the Fylde Water Board, and the Fylde, Preston, and Garstang and the Middlesex Districts Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 216.]

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill. Ordered, That the Evidence taken before the Committee on the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill, 1903, and the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill, 1904, be referred to the Committee on the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill, without Amendment.

London and North Western Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 2).

Colonel Bowles reported from the Committee on Group No. 2 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT (LONDON) (No. 2) BILL

Petition from St. Giles in the Fields and St. George, Bloomsbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

STREET BETTING BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Clapham; Glasgow; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report on the Banking and Railway Statistics of Ireland for the half-year ended 31st December, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CONTINUATION CLASSES).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Continuation Classes providing further instruction for those who have left school, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (FOREST SERVICE).

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the training of Forestry Students [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 11th May; *Mr. Price*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 163.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3371 to 3374 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into Charities (County of Berks). Return relative thereto [ordered 28th March; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 164.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Average Cost at the Ordnance Factories of 12-inch Mark IX. Gun.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the average cost of a 12-inch Mark IX. gun at the Ordnance Factory, exclusive of all parts not subject to great wear and tear from firing.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The cost of a 12-inch Mark IX. gun, complete in Ordnance Factories, is £9,800. The only part subject to great wear and tear from firing is the inner "A" tube, which costs £1,100.

Cost of Battleship "King Edward VII."

MR. EMMOTT: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the estimated cost of the battleship "King Edward VII." complete with stores, ammunition, coal and oil fuel, at recent prices; and what is the complement of H.M.S. "King Edward VII."

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The estimated cost of H.M.S. "King Edward VII.," complete with stores, ammunition, coal and oil fuel, is £1,568,650. It is not considered desirable to publish the information asked for in the last part of the Question.

Paupers, Lunatics, and Deaf and Dumb Persons in Public Institutions, and Births, Deaths, and Marriages per 10,000 of population in Ireland.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number per 10,000 of population of paupers, of lunatics, of deaf and dumb supported by public institutions, and compare these figures with similar figures for other parts of the United Kingdom; whether he will supply a similar comparison in respect of births, deaths, and marriages per 10,000 of population; whether he will supply a similar comparison of labourers employed in industrial establishments per 10,000 of population.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The numbers, per 10,000 of the population, of persons maintained by boards of guardians in Ireland, on April 29th, 1905, were as follows—

Indoor.	No. per 10,000 of population.
In workhouse and district schools :—	
Ordinary paupers	90·2
Lunatics and epileptics	8·8
In extern institutions :—	
Deaf and dumb	1·0
Blind, imbeciles, and other persons sent to hospitals for special treatment	1·4
Outdoor.	
Receiving ordinary relief	133·7
Receiving special relief under Section 13 of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898	27·9
Total	263·0

The number, per 10,000 of the population, of deaf and dumb persons in special institutions for such persons on Census night, 1901 (the latest date for which figures are available), was 1·2. The similar proportion of lunatics supported in public institutions (including those in workhouses as above-mentioned) on January 1st, 1904, the latest date for which figures are available, was 49·6. The numbers of births, deaths, and marriages, per 10,000 of the estimated population, for the year 1904, were :—Births, 236; Deaths, 181; Marriages, 52. No information is available upon which a reply can be given to the last inquiry. I am unable to furnish figures for other parts of the United Kingdom.

Names and Qualifications of Inspectors in the Irish Department of Agriculture.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many agricultural inspectors are employed by the Irish Department of Agriculture, what are their names, what are the qualifications of those officials for their present duties, and what was their occupation before they received the appointment of agricultural inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The number of agricultural inspectors employed by the Department is eight. Their names, with particulars as to their previous employment and qualifications, are as follows :—J. G. Gordon, B.Sc.—Manager of his own farm in county Tyrone; Principal of Holmes Chapel School of Agriculture, Cheshire; B.S. in Agriculture, Edinburgh University. T. S. Porter—Superintendent of the Agricultural Department, Irish Land Commission, in which capacity he supervised the agricultural operations of the Congested Districts Board. Transferred to the Department of Agriculture in pursuance of Sections 2 and 22 of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act, 1899. J. Wood, M.A., B.Sc.—Assistant Lecturer in Agriculture at University College, North Wales; Assistant Lecturer in West of Scotland Agricultural College; B.Sc. in Agriculture, Durham University. T. Carroll, M.R.I.A.—Professor of Agriculture and Superintendent of the Albert Model Farm, Glasnevin, county Dublin; and Agricultural Inspector under the Board of National Education, Ireland. J. H. Hinchcliff, Ph.D.—Technical Assistant in Agricultural Department of Yorkshire College, Leeds; Gold Medallist, Royal Agricultural Society; Ph.D. of Leipsic University. A. R. Robertson, F.H.A.S.—Estate Agent's Assistant, and subsequently Technical Assistant in Agricultural Branch of Department; Fellow of the Highland Agricultural Society. E. Gallagher—Editor, Irish Farmers' Gazette; trained at Albert Model Farm, Glasnevin, county Dublin; Holder of Diploma and Medal of Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland. M. J. Cleary, M.R.C.V.S. (Inspector for live stock schemes)—Veterinary Surgeon in private practice; Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

Titled Personages and Ministers of the Crown fined for Furious Motor-Car Driving.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he would consent to the granting of a Return of the titled personages and Ministers of the Crown who have, during the last two years, been fined for the driving of motor-cars to the peril of the safety of the public.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I am informed that this Return cannot be given without a great deal of trouble, even if it were not an invidious matter to single out a particular class of the community for criticism.

Motor-Bicycles—Alteration of Numbers to avoid Identification.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the shifting of motor-bicycle numbers, that the riders might escape in case of an accident, and to the evidence in the case of the King *v.* Flood, recently tried by the Recorder of Dublin, in which a boy was seriously injured by a motor-bicycle on which there was a fraudulent number; and whether he intends to initiate legislation to regulate defects in the numbering and registration of motors calculated to conduce to the escape of persons whose furious driving causes loss of life or limb.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The case, so far as appears from the Question, seems fairly covered by Section 5 of the Motor-Car Act of 1903. I am informed that the Department has no information as to the shifting of motor-bicycle numbers generally. The Metropolitan Police have taken action in a considerable number of cases in which various frauds have been perpetrated in the use of motor-car numbers, but they are unable apparently to distinguish which of these, if any, are motor-bicycle cases. The Departments are not of opinion that legislation is desirable, at any rate until the Act comes up for review next session. It expires on December 31st, 1906.

Penalties for Furious Motor-Car Driving.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the fines inflicted for the furious driving of motor-cars are, having regard to the fact that the owners of these cars are necessarily in easy circumstances, so small as to be ineffective as deterrents to the commission of such offences; and whether he proposes to initiate any legislation to secure adequate punishment for these offenders.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I am advised that in the opinion of the Department concerned there is no reason to think that the fines are inadequate. The Act enables substantial fines to be exacted, viz.: £20 for the first offence, £50 for the second or imprisonment not exceeding three months. In addition to this the driver's licence may be suspended, the holder being thus disqualified from driving a motor-car for such period as the Court thinks fit. The Act further provides that nothing in it shall affect any liability of the driver or owner of a motor-car by virtue of any statute or at common law. The motorist is thus liable to all civil and criminal consequences of his acts.

Number of Regular Troops required, and Position assigned to the Volunteers for Home Defence.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state the number of troops necessary for home defence based on the scheme agreed to by the Committee of Imperial Defence.

Mr. McCRAE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state what will be the position assigned to the Volunteers in the scheme of national defence considered necessary by the Committee of Imperial Defence to repel invasion; and whether he will give an early day for the discussion of Vote 5, Army Estimates (Volunteers).

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I am afraid, owing to other claims on the Committee of Supply, I cannot fix the date for this particular Vote. With all respect, I do not think that the matter raised in these Questions by the hon. Gentleman can be usefully dealt with in the form of Question and Answer.

Extra Fees paid to the Law Officers of the Crown.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what were the four cases in which increased fees above the ordinary professional scales were sanctioned for payment to the Law Officers, and what amount was paid in each case; and if he can state the amounts paid in other cases where they exceeded £200 in any individual case.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) None of the fees in the cases to which the Question appears to refer were above the ordinary professional scales. The fees were as follows:—Attorney-General: Venezuelan Claims Arbitration—In all 1,050 guineas, for preparing case and two counter cases, and for brief; refreshers, 50 guineas a day, and fees for consultations. British Guiana Arbitration—Preparing written argument, 500 guineas, and fees for consultations. Solicitor-General: Rex *v.* Osborn and others—200 guineas; refreshers, 30 guineas a day, and fees for consultations. Rex *v.* Hooley and Lawson—250 guineas; refreshers, 30 guineas a day, and fees for consultations. It would require a considerable time to furnish an Answer to the last part of the Question, and without going into the particulars of each case in which the total amount may have reached as much as 200 guineas it would afford no useful information. It is believed that there would be very few of such cases.

Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1903—Medical Officials under Section 55.

Mr. WALLACE (Perth): To ask the Lord-Advocate, in regard to Section 55 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1903, whether he will give instructions to the procurators-fiscal that, for the purposes of this section, any registered medical practitioner is to be regarded as a medical officer.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Answer to the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

Expenditure from Public Funds on Wick, Fraserburgh, and Peterhead Harbours.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Lord-Advocate how much money out of public funds has been spent respectively on the harbours of Wick, Fraserburgh, and Peterhead.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Public Works Loan Commissioners have advanced to the Wick and Pulteney Town Harbour Trustees £125,000 (of which sum, however, a large amount was expended on the breakwater which was totally destroyed by storms, and was remitted by The Public Works Loans Act, 1902); the Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners, £195,000; the Peterhead Harbour Trustees, £72,000. A grant of £11,745 has also been paid to the Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners.

Non-provided Schools in England and Wales—Cost of Maintenance for 1904–5.

Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education what was the total cost of maintaining the non-provided schools in England and Wales during the educational year 1904–5, distinguishing the amounts received from Government grants, local taxation, voluntary contributions, endowments, and any other sources of revenue; and what during the same period was the annual value of the school buildings of such schools.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) I am afraid that the Board do not possess any of the information asked for in the Question.

Structural Alterations in Schools—Duties of Board of Education Inspectors.

MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the fact that conflicting orders have been given to school managers by His Majesty's inspectors and those appointed by education committees of county councils with reference to structural alterations; and if he will consider the desirability of issuing a circular strictly defining the duties of His Majesty's inspectors in such cases.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) His Majesty's inspectors have no power to give orders as to structural alterations; they report to the Board. It is for the Board to decide to what extent the inspector's suggestions shall be enforced; but in practice the local education authority has always an opportunity of expressing an opinion before a final decision is arrived at. The relations of a local authority's inspector to his authority are presumably of a similar character. Managers of voluntary schools possess a right of appeal to the Board as to the reasonableness of a local authority's requirements; and I do not think it would be necessary or desirable to issue a circular to His Majesty's inspectors on the subject of duties which are already clearly defined and understood.

Trustees Appointed under the Judicial Trustees Act, 1896.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General how many judicial trustees have been appointed under the Judicial Trustees Act, 1896.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) I have not yet been able to ascertain the exact figures, but the number is, I understand, not large.

Sick Leave in the Central Telegraph Office—Case of Mr. Bullamore.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a telegraphist, named Bullamore, who was absent from duty at the Central Office from 12th April to 4th May, has had his pay stopped for this period; and whether, seeing that the telegraphist provided medical certificates showing that the absence during the whole of this period was due to illness, he will explain the reason for punishing the telegraphist for obeying the injunctions of his medical advisers, as well as for his decision to set aside the expressed opinions of two medical men.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Mr. Bullamore has been examined by the Chief Medical Officer of the Post Office as well as by the Medical Referee to the Treasury, and both gentlemen are of opinion that he was and is fit for work, and that he will not be injured by it This opinion is not concurred in by the private practitioners whom Mr. Bullamore consulted, but I am not prepared to set it aside for that reason. Mr. Bullamore was informed in March last that pay could not be allowed in respect of further sick absences except upon the recommendation of my official medical advisers.

Selection of Staff for the Marine Post Office.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, since it was stated that the question of competency was the one that would have effect when officers would be selected for the marine post office, he will say if it is his intention to appoint the officers on the Dublin and Queenstown T. P. O., in view of the fact that these men have been dealing with American mails for twenty years, and that by their training they are as well fitted for the position of sorting clerks on the marine post office as any other officials.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) In reply to this Question, I cannot do better than refer to the Answer gived to a Question on the same subject, asked on the 9th instant†. As I then intimated, convenience in working the system and competency to perform the duties will govern the selection of officers; and I cannot pledge myself to the employment of men willing to be transferred to Liverpool, irrespectively of the convenience of the service.

Petition of Ilford Postmen.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is in a position to reply to the petition sent to him by the Ilford postmen on 21st February, and acknowledged by the Secretary of the General Post Office about the 8th March, who promised that it should receive due consideration; and whether he will grant the Ilford postmen a maximum wage of 28s., seeing that the maximum wage in the adjacent parish of East Ham, where rent and cost of living is cheaper, is 30s.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 1339.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The petition from the Ilford postmen is receiving attention, and a reply will be given to the memorialists as soon as the necessary inquiries have been completed. I am not in a position to say at present what the decision will be.

Promotion in the Dublin Post Office.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what is the number of superior appointments to be created in the telegraph office and in the sorting office, Dublin, as the result of the new scheme; and whether the appointments will be given to the staffs of the Dublin Office, and in each case the selections will be made solely according to seniority and efficiency.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The question of the number of additional superior appointments to be created in the Dublin Post Office is being considered, and the result will be announced to the staff in due course. The officers promoted will be those best fitted for the higher posts, due regard being paid to seniority.

Journeys of Officials employed on the Great Southern and Western Travelling Post Office.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that certain officers employed on the Great Southern and Western Travelling Post Office have to proceed from Dublin to Cork on two days of the week, notwithstanding that they were originally appointed on the condition that Limerick Junction was to be the terminus of the journey, and that on the other four days of the week the officers travel to Limerick Junction only; and whether, seeing that the result of the trips to Cork necessitates the officers paying for lodgings in Dublin, Cork, and Limerick Junction, and that the journey from Dublin to Cork and back in a single day has been condemned by the medical officer, he will see that the practice is discontinued and the men required to travel according to the original stipulation only.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I will make inquiry on this subject and communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Terms of Reference to Reformatory and Industrial Schools Committee.

MR. BILL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the terms of the reference to the Committee just appointed on Reformatory and Industrial Schools will include the consideration of the question of pensions or superannuation allowances for masters, matrons, and officers of the schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The Answer is in the negative. The terms of reference to the Committee, which the hon. and gallant Member will have seen in the Press notices, relate only to the provision of funds for the schools; and it is not proposed to extend the inquiry further.

Case of Anthrax at a Wellingborough Boot Factory.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a report from either or both the local medical inspectors under the Factory and Workshop Act as to the fatal case of anthrax at Wellingborough to a shoe hand named Albert Jones; whether such report, if any, indicates any special point on which further regulations will be made to better secure the safety of those who have to handle leather; and, if no such report has been received, whether he will cause a special inquiry to be held into the circumstances attending the death of Albert Jones, and take any further steps necessary to ensure greater safety in this class of work.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The fatal case of anthrax in a boot and shoe factory to which the hon. Member refers has been the subject of careful investigation. It is impossible to trace with certainty the cause of infection; but it seems probable that the disease may have been contracted from spores of anthrax in the leather, which had retained their vitality through all the tanning processes. As no raw hides or skins are used in the factory in question no special rules or regulations under the Factory Act apply to it; and in view of the extreme rarity of such cases as the present one, and of the doubt as to the source of the infection, no case is as yet made out for any special action.

Indian Army — Transfer of Officers—Compensation for Expenses of Removal.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has yet consulted the Government of India on the Question put to him on 24th March,† 1904, as to whether the attention of his military advisers has been directed to the fact that, as a result of the unification of the Indian Army, officers are liable to be shifted on promotion, and more frequently without promotion, from one end of India to another, sometimes within short periods, each change involving a break up and renewal of establishment and a considerable expense to the officer concerned: and whether, at least in cases where the transfer is not accompanied by substantial promotion, but is made with no advantage to the individual, reasonable compensation for the expense involved to him by such transfer could be awarded, and what steps have been taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I have consulted the Government of India, who reply that, while the liability of military officers to transfer is inseparable from the conditions of military service, no recent changes have been made in regulations; and transfers, though sometimes necessary for the good of the service, are rare in the case of regimental officers, and with regard to staff officers are never ordered without due consideration. The travelling expenses of officers on transfer are paid.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants—Case of John O'Driscoll.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the application of John O'Driscoll to the Estates Commissioners for reinstatement in the evicted farm at Coolclogher, Hegarty Estate, near Millstreet, county Cork, whether, in view of the denial by Mr. O'Driscoll of the landlord's statement as to his *status* as an evicted tenant, and also to the fact that the holding is untenanted, the Commissioners will direct an inspector to examine into all the circumstances of the case and give the evicted tenant's representative an opportunity of explaining his claims under the provisions of the Land Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the replies which I gave to his Questions of 4th‡ and 13th§ April last. The owner of this estate has not expressed any desire to sell it, and the Commissioners, therefore, do not propose to direct any inquiry into the matter.

Purchase of Dr. Joyce's Farm at Carrickmore—Failure of Tenant to Pay Instalments.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Estates Commissioners purchased recently from Dr. Joyce, J.P., Carrickmore, county Tyrone, a farm of sixty-nine acres for the purpose of transferring it to a Mr. Dunlop, from county Donegal, and that Dunlop refuses to pay instalments because the arable acreage is less than represented by the vendor; and will he say if the farm was inspected and mapped and extent of arable ground stated thereon; what is the Poor Law valuation and the amount of the purchase money; and whether, in view of the second inspection made at the request of Dunlop, will he state whether the second inspector's report bears out the contention of Dunlop that the arable acreage is less than represented by the vendor.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Estates Commissioners were not the purchasers in this case; Mr. Dunlop purchased direct from the vendor. The Commissioners had the lands inspected, with the object of satisfying themselves as to the security, and, being so satisfied, they sanctioned the advance. Dunlop has raised objection to pay the annuity upon the grounds stated, but the Commissioners cannot entertain this objection, and proceedings are being taken for the recovery of the amount due.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxii., 606.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 307.

§ See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 51.

Increased Pay for Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he intends carrying out the recommendations contained in the Commissioners' Reports of 1901 in regard to increased pay of Royal Irish Constabulary; and, if so, when.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Effect has already been given to such of the recommendations of the Committee as do not involve legislation. I am unable at present to say when legislation on the subject can be introduced.

Complaints against Belmullet and Bangor-Erris Police Force.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether any charges have been made by Patrick Murphy, of Munhin, Bangor-Erris, county Mayo, against members of the Royal Irish Constabulary stationed in Belmullet and in Bangor-Erris, county Mayo, and, if so, has any inquiry into these charges been ordered by the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Yes, Sir, charges of various kinds against several members of the force have been made by the person named. These complaints were carefully investigated and found to be either unfounded or frivolous, and to have been made from vindictive motives.

Promotion in the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that young men joining the Dublin Metropolitan Police are guaranteed that all promotions shall be made from the ranks of the force, according to seniority, ability, and good conduct, no reference being made to influence; and whether he can say if those conditions have been observed in filling the higher positions in the force.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Promotions are made from the ranks, and are regulated by the fulfilment of requirements, of which influence is certainly not one, common to all disciplined forces of police.

Delay in Payment of Salary of Teacher of Armagh M. N. School, Roll No. 101.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the reason of the delay in paying to the teacher of the Armagh M. N. School, Roll No. 101, his salary for the quarter ending the 31st March, notwithstanding that his quarterly return and salary claim were forwarded to the Education Office on 1st April.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The senior inspector has been directed to inquire into a charge which has been preferred against this teacher, and, pending the receipt of the inspector's report, payment of salary has been withheld.

Condition of Irish Poor Law Medical Service.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the recent report of Surgeon-General Evatt, as to the condition of the Irish Poor Law Medical Service, and if he will grant a small Committee to consider the grievances complained of.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have nothing to add to the reply given by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover to the similar Question addressed to him on the 29th April†, 1904.

Experiment by Irish Board of Agriculture regarding Impregnation of Soil with Nitrogen Bacteria.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Board of Agriculture have made any experiments regarding the impregnation of the soil with nitrogen bacteria; whether the experiments have proved successful; and, if so, will steps be taken to instruct the Irish farmers in this process.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department have inoculated soils at numerous centres in the manner referred to in the Question, but until the crops have had time to grow it is impossible to say with what results. If the system proves successful the agricultural instructors appointed by county committees will show farmers how to use the preparation.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxiv., 12.

Corporal Punishment of Chinese Labourers in the Transvaal.

MR. BEAUMONT (Northumberland, Hexham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the number of Chinamen who have been sentenced to corporal punishment since the introduction of indentured labour into the Transvaal, the number of strokes in each case, and in how many instances the sentence was carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The Returns for July to January, published in [Cd. 2401], show, as I understand, that five were sentenced during that period to twenty strokes for assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm, the Return for February which was subsequently received shows one case sentenced to ten strokes for the same offence. The sentences were, I understand, carried out. I should add that, as is pointed out at page 41 of [Cd. 2401], by the law of the Colony no sentence of whipping imposed by a magistrate can be carried out till the record is sent to and the sentence confirmed by a Judge of the Supreme Court. I will make inquiry as to any subsequent sentences of the kind.

Pistols Manufactured at Enfield Small Arms Factory.

MR. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire, Hertford): To ask the Secretary of State for War what number of pistols were manufactured at the Enfield Small Arms Factory and the cost per pistol for the years 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885; what was the amount spent on plant and machinery for pistols at Enfield for the same period; and what has become of the machinery.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) As regards the first part of the Question a statement containing the required statistics is attached. As regards the second part of the Question the amounts expended cannot be ascertained as no separate account for plant and machinery for pistols was kept. As regards the third part of the Question such machines as could be utilised and were worth conversion were altered and used for the manufacture of rifles, and the remainder were brought to produce.

Pistols Manufactured at Enfield.

Year.	Description.	Number.	Rate.			Amount.		
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1878–9	— —	Nil.						
1879–1880	— —	Nil.						
1880–1881	Pistols, Revolver, Enfield Mark I. - - - - -	11,112	2	19	7·2	33,110	16	4¾
1881–2	Pistols, Revolver, B.L. Enfield pattern - - - - -	1,307	2	19	7·2	3,894	13	8
1882–3	Pistols, Revolver, Mark II. -	8,480	3	5	3	27,664	19	2
1883–4	Do. do.	1,002	2	12	11	2,651	12	6¾
1884–5	Do. do.	2,623	2	3	11	5,763	14	10¼
,,	Pistols, Gunmetal, Instantaneous Fuze, Mark II. - - -	9	3	4	3·2	28	0	5
1885–6	Pistols, Revolver, B.L. Enfield, Mark II. - - - -	2,050	1	16	4½	3,720	7	4¾
,,	Pistols, Revolver, Gunmetal, Instantaneous Fuze, Mark II.	320	2	19	6	952	2	2¼
1886–7	Pistol, Revolver, B.L. Enfield, Mark II. - - - -	1	1	16	4	1	16	4

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Transport of Soldiers in South Africa.

*General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in South Africa soldiers are moved by railway in carriages which are set apart for natives, and in which no white man will travel, and that when soldiers are placed in these carriages slips marked "soldiers," or "military," and which are kept available for this purpose, are pasted over the word "natives"; and whether, in the interests of the Army, he will take steps to have this practice discontinued, and British troops conveyed under the same conditions and in the same carriages as other white men.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): Nothing is known at the War Office of the matter alleged in the Question. Inquiries will, however, be made.

*General LAURIE: Will the right hon. Gentleman ascertain as to the protests made by Commanding Officers against this treatment of their men?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No such complaints have been received at the War Office.

The Tibetan Convention.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if any modifications in the terms of the Tibet Convention have been agreed upon in consequence of the negotiations that have recently taken place between Great Britain and China; if so, will he state the nature and particulars of the changes to be effected; and, further, if the Government of India have been consulted on the subject.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The negotiations as to the adhesion of China to the Tibet Convention are still proceeding, and I am not in a position to make any statement on the subject. The negotiations are being conducted on behalf of His Majesty's Government in India by the Government of India.

The Agreement with the Mullah.

*Mr. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will now lay upon the Table the terms of the provisional agreement which has been concluded with the Mullah.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn on the 10th inst†. There is no object in laying the terms of a provisional agreement which is to be superseded by the fuller treaty concluded with the Italian Government.

*Mr. LEIF JONES: Is there any special reason for withholding this agreement?

Earl PERCY: There is no reason whatever.

*Mr. LEIF JONES: How does the noble Lord know that there is no object in laying it on the Table of the House?

Earl PERCY: It is an incomplete document, merely an abbreviated form of the Italian Agreement, and it is to be superseded by another treaty.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Can the noble Lord give an explanation of the long delay in the information coming to the Government as to the actual position between them and the Mullah. The arrangement was made six or eight weeks ago.

Earl PERCY: I gave an identical Answer ten days ago. Some of the delay has been caused through the transmission of telegrams between this country and Somaliland.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the definitive agreement, when it arrives, be laid on the Table of the House?

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 1478.

EARL PERCY: Oh, certainly.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Will it have the Mullah's signature?

[No Answer was returned.]

Savings Bank Capital Account.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been directed to the statement of Sir E. W. Hamilton, in his evidence given before the Select Committee on Savings Banks Funds, 1902 (Question 1152), that if Consols went down to 90 there would be a serious loss on the capital account of the savings banks; and whether, as Consols have fallen to 90 and lower, he will say if this loss on the capital account has been incurred; and, if so, is it his intention to propose measures for making the same good.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen Sir E. Hamilton's evidence before the Committee in which he pointed out that, if Consols went down to 90 and it were necessary to realise them at that price, a great loss of capital would be incurred—not, however, by the savings bank depositors, but by the Exchequer. But no necessity has arisen, or, as far as I can see, is likely to arise, for selling at current prices the Consols which are held as permanent investments. No such loss has therefore been realised, and no special measures are necessary in respect of the savings banks.

Staff of Marine Post Office on American Liners.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state whether men from the Liverpool Post Office have been appointed to the marine post office which is to be established on the American liners; and does he intend to appoint any officials from the Dublin Office who have for years dealt efficiently with American mails, and who are willing to transfer to Liverpool in the event of their being selected for the duty.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): In reply to this Question and that asked by the hon. Member for the College Division of Dublin, I cannot do better than refer to the Answer given to a Question on the same subject asked on the 9th instant.† As I then intimated, convenience in working the system and competency to perform the duties will govern the selection of officers; and I cannot pledge myself to the employment of men willing to be transferred to Liverpool, irrespectively of the convenience of the service.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked whether the principle of natural selection that prevailed on the Treasury Bench would be adopted.

LORD STANLEY: Yes, Sir. The best man for the job.

The following is the Question of the hon. Member for College Green referred to in the above Answer—

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, since it was stated that the question of competency was the one that would have effect when officers would be selected for the marine post office, he will say if it is his intention to appoint the officers on the Dublin and Queenstown T. P. O., in view of the fact that these men have been dealing with American mails for twenty years, and that by their training they are as well fitted for the position of sorting clerks on the marine post office as any other officials.

Books for Prisoners.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a statement made by the Rev. Charles Jennings (who on Friday the 5th inst. was sent to Worcester Gaol for refusing to pay the education rate), that he took with him to prison three books, viz. "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis, the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar, and Charles Lamb's "Essays of Elia," that he was allowed to retain the Thomas à Kempis and Cæsar, but was not allowed to keep the "Essays of Elia"; will he say what authority is responsible for this action, and on what grounds was this selection of books made; and whether the exercise of such authority meets with the sanction of the Prison Commissioners.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 13 9.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The prison rules provide for the supply to prisoners of books from the prison library, and do not allow them to have others, except by special authority. In this case the governor, out of special consideration to the prisoner, who was only under a sentence of seven days, allowed him to have two of his own books to read as well as a supply from the library, and in all the circumstances I entirely agree with the Prison Commissioners in thinking that he would not have been justified in allowing more than two.

In answer to a further Question,

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said the matter was one for the discretion of the governor.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): What authority settles what books shall be in the prison library?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I cannot say, but I will ascertain if the hon. Gentleman desires.

Telephone Fires in London.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of the inquiry into the cause of the telephone fires at the Mansion House Chambers and Oxford Court, Cannon Street, which disclosed the fact that the fires broke out simultaneously through a telephone cable coming into contact with a high tension current; and, in view of expert evidence as to the danger of such currents being in proximity to telephone cables will he consider the expediency of appointing a Committee to inquire into the subject of telephone risks and their prevention.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: My attention has been called to this matter by a report made to me by the coroner for the City of London, and I have also consulted the authorities of the General Post Office. I understand that the question of preventing the occurrence of similar fires in the future raises no problems of special difficulty. The expert advisers of the General Post Office, and also, I do not doubt, those of the National Telephone Company, constantly keep in view the prevention of risks arising from the laying of telephone cables, and in these circumstances I agree with the coroner's jury in thinking that it is not necessary to hold a Government inquiry.

Destruction of Stray London Dogs.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Denbighshire, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the veterinary and other yards to which the Metropolitan Police take stray dogs are subject to any and what inspection, and if there exists any and what prescribed method of destroying such dogs; whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the yard in High Street, Bromley, a dog was recently buried alive under the mistaken belief that it had been destroyed, and that at the same yard a dog was recently destroyed by suffocation and suffered great agony during the process; and whether he proposes to take any and what action in the matter.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Dogs which are seized by the Metropolitan Police within the county of London or within the limits of the Metropolitan Streets Act are conveyed by them to the Dogs Home at Battersea. The local authorities outside the County of London are the county and borough councils, who appoint their own receiving places for dogs and their own veterinary inspectors, and are solely responsible for the control and inspection of those places and for the method of destruction adopted. The yard in the High Street, Bromley, is under the Kent County Council. I am informed that the dogs are never suffocated there, but they are destroyed by means of prussic acid poisoning. It appears that on the 4th August, 1904, a dog which had been so poisoned by the veterinary inspector and which apparently was dead was buried lightly in a pit, but was subsequently found to be alive and was rescued. The case was investigated by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, who came to the conclusion, I understand, that no cruelty was intentionally committed, but recommended that a considerable time should elapse between the poisoning and the burial of the dog.

London Electricity Bills.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: On behalf of the hon. Member for the City of London, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the fact that numerous Private Bills dealing with the supply of electricity in bulk within the Metropolitan district are now under consideration by a Select Committee of the House of Lords, the Government intend to proceed with their Supply of Electricity Bill; and, if so, when; and whether, in the event of the Government proceeding with that Bill, he will see that the Second Reading is taken in time to allow it to be referred to the same Select Committee to which such, if any, of the Private Bills as come down from the House of Lords are referred.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The principal object of the Supply of Electricity Bill is to facilitate procedure by Provisional Order instead of by Bill, and thus to save expense to local authorities and companies who may wish to obtain statutory powers for electric supply. I hope to be able to proceed with the Bill, which was fully considered by a Committee in another place last year, as soon as public business admits. The Bill is a Public Bill and has no special reference to the Metropolitan district. I do not think it would be at all convenient to refer a Public Bill to a Committee charged with the duty of considering the specific proposals of certain Local Bills.

Accidents on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he has received a report of an accident which occurred at Copy Pit, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on 23rd April last, to the 9.20 p.m. goods train, Hollinwood to Rose Grove, which consisted of 120 loaded wagons, weight 1,000 tons, with two engines in front and one in the rear, due to the drawbar hook of the eightieth wagon from the train engine breaking whilst the train, owing to its length, hung over both sides of the summit, and the latter portion running back and off the line at some catch points; and whether he proposes to take any action with a view to preventing such accidents.

MR. BELL: I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he has received a report of a breakaway which occurred at Copy Pit, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on 5th May instant, to the 7.23 p.m. goods train from Leeds to Rose Grove, consisting of eighty loaded wagons with two engines in front and one in the rear, the front portion running away to Cliviger East Cabin; whether he can state the number of accidents and breakaways which have occurred during the last three years in this district of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and if they were due to the length of the trains; and whether he will take immediate action with a view to preventing such accidents.

MR. BONAR LAW: Neither of these accidents has been reported to the Board of Trade, nor do the circumstances as stated by the hon. Member appear to have been such as to require them to be reported, if, as I gather, no personal injury resulted. Since the 1st January, 1902, eleven accidents in the district referred to, due to the breaking away of parts of goods trains, have been reported by the railway company in question, although in eight of these cases no one was injured. The Board's information does not show whether the length of the trains caused or contributed to any of these accidents. Advantage will be taken of an inquiry about to be held by one of the Board's inspecting officers into another accident in the neighbourhood to make some investigation into the general question to which the hon. Member has drawn attention.

Hungry London Children.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has now considered the desirableness of making any charge incurred under the Order dealing with the feeding of hungry children in London a charge upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and not upon the poor rate for each parish; and, if so, whether he has arrived at any decision upon the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): As the hon. Member is aware, legislation would be necessary to give effect to his suggestion. I could not give any promise to introduce a Bill for this purpose.

DR. MACNAMARA: Will the Local Government Board spread the incidence of this cost over London?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot go beyond what I said on a previous occasion. I think the matter is worthy of consideration, but I do not see any chance of introducing the necessary legislation this session.

Feeding of Fatherless Children.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Order dealing with the feeding of hungry children will enable boards of guardians to assist under it fatherless children living with their mothers, and to assist the children of wives not living with their husbands.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Order would not apply in the first case mentioned in the Question, or in the second, if the child was not residing with the father. The limitations in the Order are consequent on the terms of the enactments under which it was issued, but in any case of the kind referred to, if the child was, in fact, destitute of necessary food, and application for relief was made on his behalf to the guardians or the relieving officer by any responsible person, it would be incumbent on the guardians, and in a case of sudden or urgent necessity on the relieving officer, to afford the requisite relief. In general, however, it could not be given on loan.

Heavy Motor Traffic in London.

*GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has seen any of the furniture removal vans, with locomotive fittings and with another furniture van attached as a trailer, which are now occupying the streets of the Metropolis, and which are permitted under the heavy motor-car regulations to travel at a speed far in excess of what is allowed to horse traffic; and whether he will take steps by personal observation and otherwise to examine the situation and make such modifications as will restore to the general public the free use of the public roads.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand there are a certain number of vans answering to the description in the Question at present in use in the Metropolis. Under the regulations the speed of a heavy motor-car drawing a trailer is not to exceed five miles an hour, and I understand that the police have been directed to see that the vehicles in question do not proceed at a speed in excess of the legal maximum.

*GENERAL LAURIE: But is it not a fact that these heavy motor-cars with rubber tyres are allowed to go eight miles an hour?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think these cars have rubber tyres.

*GENERAL LAURIE: I am certain that under the regulations they can travel eight miles an hour and go much quicker than five miles.

Holborn Town Clerk's Defalcations.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what part the audit of the Local Government Board has played in connection with the frauds of which the late town clerk of Holborn has been convicted; whether he has any official information showing that robberies to the amount of thousands of pounds have for years been passed by the audit, which, but for the fact that the town clerk became ill, would not have been discovered; and what steps, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: At the last audit, the district auditor discovered that Mr. Jones, the late town clerk of Holborn, had improperly retained a large sum received by him on behalf of the borough council, and as a result of this discovery all the frauds of which Mr. Jones was convicted were at once brought to light. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative, and I may say that it was prior to Mr. Jones's illness that the improper retention of a considerable part of the moneys in question was discovered by the auditor, who thereupon called upon Mr. Jones to produce proof that he had not received any part of the remainder. The case does not appear to be one in which it is necessary that I should take any action.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received a request that some person representing the Government should assist the Holborn Borough Council in its present inquiry into its administration; and, if so, whether he can comply with the request.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I received a letter from the Holborn Borough Council, in which they stated that while feeling themselves perfectly competent to investigate their own affairs they would welcome the presence of any official the Local Government Board would care to send to assist at the meetings of the special committee investigating the defalcations of the late town clerk. This communication received my consideration, but I did not think it necessary to avail myself of the offer of the council.

MR. BENN: Then does the right hon. Gentleman propose to allow this investigation to be resumed without any appearance at the inquiry on the part of his Department?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think the interference of the Local Government Board is called for. Had the borough council requested me to send an official I might have done so, but they did not.

MR. BENN: But you had a letter from the council?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to argue the matter.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe). Will the right hon. Gentleman take action in accordance with the last clause of the Question?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: There has been no request.

Secret Commissions.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that during last year the Holborn Borough Council spent £1,200 in opposing Bills affecting London, and that Messrs. Bircham and Co., Parliamentary agents to the borough, paid to the late town clerk, unknown to the Holborn Borough Council, 33⅓ per cent. commission of all profit charges on such business; and whether he will take steps to extend the provisions of the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act, 1889, to such payments.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the expenses referred to in the first part of the Question approximated to the sum mentioned. It is stated in a letter from Messrs. Bircham & Co. published in the Press that they never held any appointment or retainer from the borough council, but that for some eighteen years past they had undertaken for Mr. Jones (the late town clerk) on "agency terms" certain work in connection with Parliamentary business, and that under this arrangement they made certain payments to him. The question of any extension of the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act, 1889, is hardly one for the Local Government Board, but I may remind the hon. Member that the Prime Minister stated on Thursday last† that payments of this description are now engaging the attention of the Lord Chancellor and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords, and also of the Incorporated Law Society.

Mr. BENN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Messrs. Bircham's bill was paid in full by the Holborn Town Council and that the money which Jones received was received secretly by him and without the knowledge of the council? If so, is not this a matter coming under the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It may be so, but I am not prepared to say "Yes" or "No." It would not be a matter for the Local Government Board, but rather for the law officers of the Crown.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: The right hon. Gentleman says Messrs. Bircham had long done business on "agency terms." What is the meaning of that phrase?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I said that was the statement made to me in a letter from Messrs. Bircham.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: But the right hon. Gentleman adopted it.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not well acquainted with the facts. I simply conveyed to the House the information given to me.

Parliamentary Agents and 'Agency Terms."

Mr. BENN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has any further information as to the nature of the payments made by Messrs. Bircham & Co., Parliamentary agents, by way of commission to the late town clerk of Holborn; and whether he is aware that part of this commission has, since the trial, been refunded to the borough council.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs): My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. I understand that the facts are as follows: Mr. Jones was solicitor to the Holborn Borough Council, and employed Messrs. Bircham as Parliamentary agents upon what are known as "agency terms," that is, that the fees should be divided between the solicitor and the agents. Messrs. Bircham accordingly paid Jones as his share of the fees which they had received two cheques; one for £116 13s. in respect of work up to the end of 1903, and the other for £94 14s. for work up to the end of 1904. The first of these cheques was cashed by Jones, but the cheque for £94 14s. was found uncashed among his papers by the borough council after his defalcations had come to light. The council claimed that they were entitled to it, and Messrs. Bircham paid to them the amount on receiving their indemnity against other claims by Jones or his representatives. It now appears that Jones, by the terms of his engagement with the council, was bound to hand over to them all fees received by him during his tenure of office, but Messrs. Bircham were not aware of this arrangement. Jones did not account for these fees, and retained for his own use the amount of the cheque cashed by him for £116 13s., concealing the fact that he had received it. Work upon agency terms is well known, and payments made in respect of it cannot be correctly described as "commission." Work upon such terms is very common as between solicitors, and has prevailed extensively as between Parliamentary agents and solicitors. One of the recommendations of a Joint Committee of both Houses in 1876 was that such division of fees as between Parliamentary agents and solicitors should be prohibited. Debates took place in both Houses upon this question on July 28th and August 2nd, 1876. There was then, and always has been, a great division of opinion on this subject, and no action was taken on the Report of 1876. The question of the propriety of such agency terms in the case of Parliamentary agents is now under the consideration of the authorities of both Houses.

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† See page 57.

MR. BENN: May I ask whether the Holborn Borough Council were aware of these payments from Messrs. Bircham to Jones?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I suppose the town council knew nothing of the fact; but for eighteen years similar arrangements as to agency terms had existed. I have just said that these payments were concealed by Jones from the council.

MR. BENN: Jones had not been town clerk for eighteen years; and when he was appointed quite a different set of circumstances arose, of which Messrs. Bircham were fully aware.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: The difference is not of the slightest importance. Before the arrangements with the borough council, Jones was clerk for the St. Giles's Board, and then he employed Messrs. Bircham. When the St. Giles's Board ceased to exist, Jones became town clerk of the Holborn Borough Council, and still employed Messrs. Bircham on the same terms.

MR. BENN: Has the hon. and learned Gentleman any objection to placing on the Table of the House the cross-examination of Messrs. Bircham which took place at this inquiry?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: It is open to any hon. Member to look at it.

Rates on Government Property.

MR. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that if the basis of the present assessment of the Houses of Parliament, viz.: £40,000, were amended to accord with the basis of the assessment of the Carlton Club, it would be £105,000, and of the National Liberal Club, £122,000; and whether, in view of the rising rates in London, he will take steps to ensure Government property bearing its proper share of rating.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The valuation of the Houses of Parliament was specifically mentioned in the Treasury Minute of February 7th, 1896, which contained the following passage—"The Houses of Parliament have hitherto been exempt from contributions (except as regards the residential portion) on the ground of being a Royal Palace. My Lords regard this as a case in which some contribution may be allowed, but the rules for the assessment of private property are not applicable, and they therefore sanction the payment of a moderate contribution to be fixed with due regard to the peculiar character of the property." Having regard to the peculiar character of the property, the contribution which is based on a rateable value of £40,000 is, in the opinion of the Treasury, a reasonable one.

MR. BENN: May I ask whether in view of the peculiar character of the rating burdens in London the hon. Gentleman will recommend an increase in the Government contribution?

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that intimation was given that a Committee might be appointed to consider the whole subject of the rating of Government property, including the Palace of Westminster. Is there still a willingness to appoint that Committee?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The matter was very carefully investigated by the official responsible for the Treasury in conjunction with the local authority, and the figure was agreed upon as reasonable. I can hold out no hope that the matter will be brought forward again. In reply to the hon. Member for Islington the Question is one which should be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If such an intimation were given, and if there is any strong feeling on the subject, no doubt a Committee might be appointed.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is it not a fact that this payment of rates on Government property accounts for £500,000 increase in the Civil Service Estimates in the last few years.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Yes, Sir.

MR. BENN: The investigation to which the hon. Gentleman has referred took place as far back as 1896, and in view of the recent rise in the rates I submit another revision is necessary.

Customs Watchers.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state what, if any, concessions he is prepared to make in answer to the petition of the Customs watchers.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I have this matter still under my consideration.

MR. CAUSTON: This question has now been under consideration a very long time. I will repeat the Question again next Monday.

Merioneth Education Difficulty.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can state the grounds upon which the whole of the education grants payable to the local education authority of Merionethshire, in the months of March and April last, have been withheld; and for how long it is proposed to withhold such grants.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): No March grants have been withheld; all grants which normally matured for payment during the financial year 1904–5 have been paid. The instalments of fee grant due in April last have been paid, less the sums deducted for expenses properly incurred by managers, and for which provision should have been made by the local education authority during the period from 30th September. 1903, to 30th October 1904. No annual grants fall due for payment, as regards Merioneth schools, during the month of April owing to the incidence of the school years. The aid grant under Section 10 of the Act of 1902 is paid in respect of the financial year, or rather for so much of it as a school is open. It may be paid by instalments in advance from April 1st onwards, and the Board are now considering what payments they may properly make in respect of the county of Merioneth.

Names and Qualifications of Inspectors in the Irish Department of Agriculture.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many agricultural inspectors are employed by the Irish Department of Agriculture, what are their names, what are the qualifications of those officials for their present duties, and what was their occupation before they received the appointment of agricultural inspectors.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Detailed information in these matters will be printed with to-night's Votes.

Trinity College Estates.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the sale of certain estates in the county of Kildare has been delayed and hampered owing to ignorance on the part of the parties as to the terms upon which the Trustees of Trinity College, Dublin, are willing to sell the head rents of the same; can he say whether the Trinity College Estates Commission appointed to inquire into the sale of the Trinity College estates has yet reported; and whether it will deal with the question of the terms on which such head rents will be sold.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have no information to the effect stated in the first part of the Question. The estates referred to have not come before the Estates Commissioners. As to the remainder of the Question, I would ask the hon. Member to await the Report of the Trinity College Commission, which has been received and will shortly be laid on the Table.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the sale of certain estates in county Kildare cannot be completed until the Report has been received?

MR. WALTER LONG: There will be no delay in laying the Report.

Bingham Estate, County Mayo.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, before authorising the employment of a special police force to carry out the eviction of Antony Loftus on the Bingham Estate, at Doolough, Belmullet, county Mayo, on April 26th last, he had made himself acquainted with the facts of the case; whether he is aware that the landlord had given time to the tenant for the payment of the one-and-a-half year's rent due, together with the costs, till May 12th; that the tenant had only just been supplied with seed potatoes by the local board of guardians in consequence of the failure of his crop the previous year; and that the full amount due was tendered to the sheriff immediately before the eviction took place, and was refused; and will he say whether any negotiations for the sale of this property passed between the Estates Commission or the Congested Districts Board and the landlord; and, if not, will he suggest to the Congested Districts Board the advisability of opening negotiations with the landlord, with the object of purchasing this property and restoring the evicted tenant to his former *status* thereon.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This eviction was carried out by the sheriff, for whose protection and upon whose requisition, a force of four police attended in the ordinary and necessary discharge of their duty. The Executive have no power to refuse such protection. I have no information as to the facts of the case. I understand that on March 7th the tenant received a supply of seed potatoes, as stated. So far as the police are aware, the amount due was not tendered to the sheriff. No negotiations for the sale of this property have passed between the landlord and the Estates Commissioners or Congested Districts Board. The Board are prepared to consider any offer which may be made to them.

Lord Longford's Estate, Westmeath.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether it is on his instructions that the Estates Commissioners are acting in peremptorily requiring the tenants on Lord Longford's Estate, in Westmeath, to sign agreements to purchase their holdings not at the value of the landlord's interest in those holdings, but in excess of the joint value of the landlord's and tenants' interest added together, and threatening penalties upon those tenants if they refuse to sign such agreements within a week.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The estate is being sold by direct agreement between the landlord and tenants. One tenant refused to purchase on the same terms as the other tenants. The inspector reported that this refusal was unreasonable, and the tenant was accordingly informed that unless he should agree to buy his holding would be omitted from the estate to be sold.

Bligh Estate, County Meath.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the case of Mr. O'Keefe, on the Bligh Estate, county Meath, and other cases which have been brought under the notice of the Estates Commissioners, pressure by writs and other contrivances has been applied to tenants for the purpose of compelling them to sign agreements to purchase at prices in excess of the entire value of their holdings, including the landlord's interest and their own; and whether he will instruct the Estates Commissioners to have the landlord's interest in all holdings so affected valued, irrespective of any agreements signed under duress, as a guarantee that the land so affected would be sufficient security for the moneys advanced by the State.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The application for sale includes the holding of Mr. P. O'Keefe, who, it is stated, refuses to purchase, and the vendor has asked that the holding be excluded from the sale. Before deciding the matter, the Commissioners will, through their inspector, inquire as to the reasonableness of Mr. O'Keefe's refusal to buy. If any tenant has been forced by duress to enter into any agreement to purchase he has a cheap and easy method under Section

10 of the Act of 1885 of having the agreement revoked. If he does not take that course the sale of the holding must be dealt with under the ordinary practice.

Irish Education—Rule 127 (b).

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Minutes of all meetings of the Commissioners of National Education at which Rule 127 (b) was considered.

MR. WALTER LONG: This question will be considered by the Commissioners at their next meeting, on the 23rd instant.

Cavan School Teacher's Salary.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say on what date the claim of the principal teacher of school, Roll No. 11,041, Circuit 9B, county Cavan, to an increment of good-service salary was made; and whether any unsatisfactory report was made upon the school during the triennial period; and, if so, on what date.

MR. WALTER LONG: The claim was made on April 15th, 1904. An unsatisfactory report had been made on July 14th, 1903. The claim is now being reconsidered in connection with a recent representation received from the manager on behalf of the teacher.

Domiciliary Visits by Irish Police at Athenry.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the neighbourhood of Athenry the police have been in the habit of visiting the houses of the people at night, forcing the people to get out of bed to be inspected and interrogated; and will he say by what authority such domiciliary visits are carried out.

MR. WALTER LONG: The police have visited certain houses in the district of Athenry for the purpose of obtaining information in respect to the prevention and detection of crime. This i a fundamental duty of the police which, as peace officers, they are bound to discharge. There is not the smallest foundation for the suggestion that they have forced people to get out of bed to be inspected and interrogated. The visits of the police were not made at times when the inmates of houses were in bed, and they have always been careful not to cause inconvenience in any way to the persons visited.

MR. DILLON: My information is that the people were compelled to get out of bed.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have no information as to the precise hours, but I am informed that the visits were not made at times at which the people ought to be in bed.

MR. DILLON: What was the hour? By what right do the police insist upon entering people's houses without warrant?

MR. WALTER LONG: I will endeavour to ascertain whether there is any further information as to the hour at which these proceedings were taken.

Colonel Dopping Hepenstall's Derrycassan Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any negotiations have yet been set on foot or opened with Colonel Dopping Hepenstall for the purchase of his estate at Derrycassan by the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, whether the applications of the thirteen evicted tenants on this estate for restoration to their former or equivalent holdings will be favourably considered.

MR. WALTER LONG: No proceedings for the sale of this estate have yet been instituted before the Commissioners.

Evicted Tenant's Holding on the King Harman Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when the Estates Commissioners propose to admit William Fox, an evicted tenant's son on the King Harman (county

Longford) Estate, to the possession of that part of his father's former holding which they have decided to allow him to purchase under the Land Act of 1903.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners are awaiting the decision of the Judicial Commissioner on certain legal points which have been raised, before deciding whether they will make an advance in this case.

Irish Police and Witness Summonses.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at a recent petty sessions Court, held at Longford, the county inspector of police there, Mr. Henry R. M'Dermott, refused to obey a witness summons issued by order of the Court, and duly served upon him with the usual viaticum; whether, before refusing to obey the summons, Mr. M'Dermott took the advice of the law officers of the Crown or the Constabulary authorities; and whether the police code provides any special exemption in the case of police officers any more than in that of other persons for such obedience.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The county inspector did not attend, because, owing to an informality in the proceedings, it had been decided to withdraw the case in which he was summoned as a witness. He explained the reasons for his absence to the magistrates, who did not deem his attendance necessary. The county inspector did not consult either the law officers or the Constabulary authorities. The reply to the concluding inquiry is in the negative.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: Did not the inspector himself decide that the proceedings were not in order, so that he might evade the summons?

[No Answer was returned.]

Ireland and the Income-Tax.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the proportion which the income-tax assessment on which taxes were contributed by Ireland bears to that of Great Britain, averaged for the last five years available.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The percentage of income-tax contributed by Ireland, as compared with that contributed by Great Britain, is, after making the necessary adjustments in accordance with the practice followed in preparing "Financial Relations" Returns, as follows:—

	Ireland.	Great Britain.
1899–1900	3·77	96·23
1900–1901	3·54	96·46
1901–1902	3·32	96·68
1902–1903	3·31	96·69
1903–1904	3·75	96·27

Mr. O'MARA: Ought not these to be the figures on which the taxation is levied, seeing that they represent the taxable capacity of the two countries?

[No Answer was returned.]

Irish Trade Statistics.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state what proportion the total trade imports and exports of Ireland bears to that of England as suggested by Article 7 of the Act of Union, 1800.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: As I stated last year, in answer to the hon. Member for West Islington, no machinery exists for collecting complete statistics of goods removed from port to port within the United Kindom, and, in the absence of the requisite *data*, the proportion between Ireland and England cannot be stated.

Mr. O'MARA was understood to say that according to the Act of Union these statistics were to be issued every twenty years, and that the right hon. Gentleman was infringing the Act by not issuing them.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot give figures which are not available

Lough Neagh Drainage.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will, before the forthcoming debate on arterial drainage, cause to be circulated amongst the Parliamentary Papers the instructions to, and other correspondence with, Sir William Binnie, who has been commissioned to report on the Lough Neagh drainage question.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I have not seen the correspondence referred to, but I understand that my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant has been in communication with Sir Alexander Binnie. Any Questions on that subject should therefore be addressed to him.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the trial of processes last week at the Belfast Quarter Sessions against certain occupiers of flooded lands in Lough Neagh district, in the course of which the drainage trustees admitted that the lands were flooded although the actions were brought for the cost of maintaining them drained; and whether, pending the forthcoming report from Sir William Binnie, he will take steps to suspend further proceedings in such cases.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I am informed that processes have been served and judgment given against several persons liable for the payment of Lough Neagh drainage maintenance rates, but I have no knowledge that any such admissions as that indicated in the Question were made by the trustees. In any case, the Government have no authority to intervene as suggested.

Mr. MACVEAGH: If I send the hon. Member newspaper reports containing these admissions, will he read them?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I shall be delighted to read anything the hon. Member sends me.

Charge against an Armagh Postman.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that on 25th March last a postman called Henderson, of Vernersbridge, county Armagh, discharged a revolver at a boy named Hamill; that Henderson always takes part in Orange disturbances in this locality; and whether he will consider the advisability of relieving him of his present public duties.

Lord STANLEY: I have no information on the subject, but I am making inquiry and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Military Traffic on the Roads near Crosshaven

Mr. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that complaint has been made to the War Office of the damage done to the roads near Crosshaven, county Cork, by their contractor in the conveyance of material to the Government works by traction engines; and whether, seeing that Crosshaven is a health resort, and in view of the present condition of the roads, orders will be given to have them immediately put in proper repair.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Orders have already been given for the repair of the roads at Crosshaven which have been damaged, and these repairs are already well advanced.

Mr. CREAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman hurry up the contractors? At the rate they are going on at present the season will be over before the roads are repaired.

Cavan Army Pensioner.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will inquire into the case of James Nolan, of Cavan, No. 241, Army pensioner, who is in a state of destitution; and, seeing that this man has had eleven and a-half years foreign service and was discharged on account of disease contracted whilst on active service, will his present condition be alleviated by the Government.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This man served for eleven years and three months, of which nine years one month were spent abroad. He was discharged in 1869 for phthisis and epilepsy, and was granted 6d. a day pension, the maximum rate permissible under the regulations. The

Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital have reconsidered his case, but state that he cannot be awarded any increase of pension.

Proclaimed Meeting in Galway.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at a public meeting held at Cappatagle, county Galway, on Sunday the 7th instant, the Member for that Division, while addressing his constituents, was dragged and pulled about by the police; and whether they were authorised to do so without serving him with a copy of the proclamation or giving him any notice that the meeting was proclaimed before he commenced to address his constituents.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The proclamation in the case of this meeting was issued on the 6th May. Copies of it were extensively placarded in the districts and served on the promoters and many other persons likely to attend the meeting. An unsuccessful attempt was made to serve a copy upon the hon. Member at Woodford. On the following day he endeavoured to address a meeting, notwithstanding the proclamation, which was known to everyone in the locality. The county inspector, I believe, handed him a copy, and, according to a newspaper report which I have seen, the hon. Member "tore the copy and threw the fragments on the road." The police were authorised to prevent any meeting, and in carrying out their instructions no violence whatever was used towards the hon. Member.

Mr. DILLON: Are we to understand that it is lawful for the police in Ireland to seize a Member of this House and drag him about, using violence when no resistance is offered?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am informed that no violence was used. If the police had instructions to prevent the meeting, their duty was obviously to prevent it.

Mr. ROCHE: As the Member for the Division, may I be permitted to state that I was collared by two policemen——

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) rose, as if to a point of order, his rising being followed by loud and continued cries of "Sit down," "Order," and "Name" from the Nationalist Benches.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER intervened, and in response to Nationalist cries of "A personal explanation," said: The hon. Member must put his personal explanation in the shape of a Question.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): On the point of order, may I ask whether, where an Answer such as that of the right hon. Gentleman is given, directly contravening the statement of an hon. Member as to his own action in his own constituency, it is not the invariable practice of the House to allow the hon. Member to make a personal explanation?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If the hon. Member will postpone his explanation to the conclusion of Questions, I have no doubt that the House will listen to him. There are a number of Questions on the Paper still to be answered, and it would be most unfair to shut them out by the hon. Member's personal explanation.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Was a copy of the proclamation served on the hon. Member for East Galway previous to the meeting or after the hon. Member had been dragged along the road by the police?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am told that every effort was made to serve the hon. Member before the meeting; and I am also informed that before the meeting took place the proclamation was visible in that part of the district. Whether the police were successful or not in serving the proclamation is not a matter of importance, because, as hon. Members know, the police have power to prevent a meeting from being held, whether it has been proclaimed or not.

The Aliens Bill.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the declaration of a member of the Cabinet at Bristol that the Aliens Bill had been introduced to prevent the displacement of British labour, and his promise not to proceed with the policy of protection in this Parliament, he still intends to go on with the measure.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): We certainly intend to proceed with the Bill; and my right hon. friend tells me that the speech to which reference is made in the Question does not bear the interpretation which the hon. Member puts upon it.

Escape from Fire.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, having regard to the importance of facilities for escape from fire, as disclosed in the evidence at the recent inquiry into the causes of the telephone fire at Mansion House Chambers and Oxford Court, Cannon Street, can he see his way to facilitate legislation on the lines outlined in the City of London (Means of Escape from Fire) Bill now before Parliament.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Home Secretary has consented to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the subject, as that is the best way of dealing with it.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. ROCHE said he desired to make a personal explanation as to what had occurred in relation to the proclaimed meeting in his constituency. On the 7th inst., when he was addressing his constituents, the district inspector ordered the police to drag him down immediately. Two of them, acting on the orders of the district inspector, caught him, one on each side, and dragged him to the road. Not satisfied with that, they dragged him along the road for at least fifty yards or more. He repeatedly asked them to let him go and not drag him in that manner, and he demanded what authority they had for doing so. He called for the county inspector and asked him what right these people had to insult him in this fashion and drag him about, and he requested him to direct them to let go of him. The county inspector did direct them, and they immediately let go of him. After that incident the proclamation was served upon him, and naturally in the circumstances he gave vent to his feelings and tore it up. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he had read the account of these proceedings in the Press. He challenged him to stand up there and deny that in that report the statement was made that the hon. Member for the Division had been assaulted by the police. [At this stage there were loud NATIONALIST cries of "Long."]

MR. CHURCHILL (Oldham): On a point of order, Sir, the House having listened to the personal explanation of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, are we not entitled to hear the personal explanation of the Chief Secretary on the new situation created by the hon. Member's statement?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There can be no debate or Answer upon a personal explanation. By the leave of the House the hon. Member made a personal explanation, and the House accepts it. It would be a most improper thing to contradict the hon. Member.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Somebody is a liar. Who is it?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That is a most improper observation.

MR. DILLON: On the point of order, Sir, when a Minister or any Member of the House makes a personal statement in reference to any hon. Member, and when that hon. Member of his own knowledge contradicts that statement, is it not customary in this House for the Gentleman who originally made the statement to withdraw?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have no recollection of a personal explanation being debated or contradicted in any way. [AN HON. MEMBER: Accepted.] The House at once accepts the explanation made by the hon. Member.

MR. CHURCHILL: On a point of order, Sir, I understand that you would not refuse to the right hon. Gentleman the right to make a personal explanation if he should desire to do so, and if the House did not desire to put any impediment in his way.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If the right hon. Gentleman is anxious also to make a personal explanation, and the House is ready to listen to him, of course I shall not interfere. All that I am concerned to do, as for the moment the guardian of the rules of the House, is to protect the House against a debate being raised.

Mr. WALTER LONG : There is no personal explanation to be made, so far as I am concerned. In answer to the Question, I stated the information I had received, which included a statement that no personal violence had been used. The hon. Gentleman has made his statement, which, of course, I accept, as everybody else accepts in this House any statement made by an hon. Member on a matter in his own personal knowledge. In reference to the hon. Member's Question to me as to what appeared in the Press, I think he misunderstood me. I only referred to a quotation which appeared in the newspapers, and in regard to the general account that I gave, I gave what I had received from the police, who were responsible for what took place. I submit to the House that I have no personal explanation to make.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance — namely, the declaration by the Board of Education of the default of the county of Merioneth under the provisions of the Defaulting Authorities Act.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This seems to be the first occasion on which the matter has been brought to the attention of the House, and therefore I think it may fairly be considered one of urgent public importance. But I think it necessary to enter a *caveat* that, in case of similar Motions being brought forward in relation to other counties, they can hardly be considered as proper ground for adjournment Motions.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Deputy-Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen,

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until this Evening's Sitting.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Charles Craig; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS

VALUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

"To make provision with respect to a Revision under the Irish Valuation Acts in case of a Revaluation under Section 65 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 217.]

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To regulate and control Sunday Trading in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett; supported by Mr. Hunter Craig, Sir Mark Stewart, and Mr. John Wilson (Glasgow); to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 218.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.

"To alter the age of Exemption from Attendance at School," presented by Mr. Yoxall; supported by Mr. Crooks, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Ernest Gray, Mr. Alfred Hutton, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Dr. Macnamara; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 219.]

ARCHITECTS (REGISTRATION) BILL.

"To provide for the Registration of Architects," presented by Mr. Atherley-Jones; supported by Sir William Coddington, Mr. Wallace, and Sir Christopher Furness; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th May, and to be printed. [Bill 220.]

SALMON FISHERY LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Acts, 1861 to 1892," presented by Mr. W. H. Grenfell; supported by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, and Mr. Charles Hobhouse; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 221.]

FINANCE BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said he regretted they had not the advantage of having before them on that occasion the usual Financial Relations Return, on the basis of which previous discussions on that subject had been carried on. He did not, however, propose to suggest that the Government were to blame in that matter, because he admitted that the Return had on previous occasions been moved for by a private Member, and he did not know that any Member had moved for it up to the present time that session. Therefore, he made no complaint of the fact that the Return had not been issued, nor, indeed, was he inclined to regret that fact. It was extremely doubtful whether that particular Return with which they were annually presented by the authorities at the Treasury did not do more harm than good. In his experience he had found that the basis on which the Return was made was being continually altered and new principles were being introduced from time to time. Several years ago the Treasury—in the time of Mr. Gladstone—discovered that there were very serious errors in the Return, and, accordingly, it had to be revised and made up on different lines. The latest error had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who last year said that a new principle of collating certain items in the Return would have to be adopted. So long as they did not know beforehand the principles on which the Returns were to be based, he for one, objected to allowing the defendant in the case to prepare the evidence on which the verdict was to be given. In the next place he was afraid that the form in which the Return was at present framed, and in which it had been framed in the past, justified the suggestion that it perpetuated misrepresentations and fallacies. The form in which they now received it also seemed to him calculated to perpetuate those evils to which he would allude later on. However that might be, passing from the fact that they had no Return of the usual kind this year before them for the purpose of that debate, it was obvious it was not so necessary now as on previous occasions. For that the reason was clear. It was that the changes made in the Budget of this year were very few and trifling, and, in fact, the only change of any importance which would affect the general Return on the question they were discussing had been the reduction in the duty on tea. He believed that no other material change had been made since last year, and he thought it might be taken for granted that the figures which were available for last year, therefore, were practically sufficient for the purposes of the present debate.

He did not propose to occupy the time of the House for more than a brief period that evening. The Amendment said that the Bill did not contain proposals for effectually remedying their grievance in regard to unjust financial treatment. In that respect the Amendment was literally true, and he would at once put it to the House that, if there were an injustice, it was not corrected in the Budget of this year. The real question was whether an injustice did exist. He did not think there could be any necessity to go into that matter to the extent to which they had done in previous years. To his mind every debate on the subject for several years past had not only been practically one-sided; but the few persons who had spoken against the Irish demand had given no answers to the arguments in favour of that demand. They had merely repeated the usual shallow parrot phrases which time after time had been demonstrated to have not the slightest possible foundation. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer treated them in a rather cavalier manner, considering the great importance of the subject. He contented himself with making two answers, and he did not think he would be misrepresenting the speech of the right hon. Gentleman when he said that those two answers were, broadly speaking, as follows:—In the first place, he asked the familiar question, what remedy did they propose? It was apparently in vain to tell him, as Chancellors of the Exchequer had been told on many occasions, that the Irish Members had not the power themselves to apply a remedy, and therefore the responsibility did not rest with them to discover the proper remedy. It was a very easy thing for the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors to say, "What remedy have you to propose?" but if they had attempted to put one forward it would have been equally easy for the right hon. Gentleman to criticise and reject it, and thereupon he presumed the whole question would have been shelved, at any rate by many of the right hon. Gentleman's supporters. He was even inclined to think that that suggestion was not put forward in a *bona fide* manner. Did anyone believe that the proposed remedies would be accepted? Did anyone in his senses imagine that any number of Irish Members in that House who had considered the matter carefully and in a moderate spirit, would have their opinion taken into account for five minutes if any Chancellor of the Exchequer chose to disagree with them? He confessed he did not.

Next the right hon. Gentleman gave them an answer with which they were equally familiar, and that was to ask what grievance had they when their proportionate contribution to the Empire was steadily going down. He despaired when he listened to replies of that nature, because it had been pointed out time after time how absurd such a suggestion was. Last year they were able to quote in proof of their contention a statement by the right hon. Gentleman's fellow Minister who had now ceased to hold office, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who had entirely taken their view of the case, viz., that when taxation went up all over Great Britain and Ireland as a whole, and when one of these two divisions of the Kingdom decreased in every element of wealth, while the other advanced by leaps and bounds in the opposite direction, the contribution of the weaker, though it absolutely increased, must necessarily get less in proportion. This seemed to be obvious, but in this matter it often happened that the more obvious the truth was the less it was realised by those who had authority, and he presumed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would continue to be blind to that truth even this session.

The real point for them to consider was whether their contribution was actually going up or absolutely going down, and he had some figures to submit to them on that point. For ten years before 1900 it was, on an average, under £2,000,000, it was now going up to £3,000,000. What a contrast was there between the promise and the performance; between the promise made at the time of the Union, and the performance of to-day. At the time of the Union their taxation altogether amounted to £2,500,000 a year, and Lord Castlereagh in his speeches in the Irish House of Commons recommended the Union to the Irish people on the grounds that there would be no augmentation of the debt, and no increase of taxation.

But their total contribution had gone up, their actual payments to the Treasury had gone up to £12,000,000 in one hundred years. Let him say, before he went any further, that he, for one, believed that the contributions as set down in the Treasury Return were far short of the figure at which they ought to stand. Some sessions ago the then Chancellor of the Exchequer the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when he was making a somewhat similar comment, suggested that he was attacking certain Treasury officials. He was doing nothing of the kind; he was simply attacking their masters, who directed them to make the Return on certain lines. He said now frankly his belief was that this was done with the express purpose of showing that they were not paying as much to the Empire as they actually were contributing. There were in the Return two columns showing the revenue extracted from Ireland, one was headed, "Revenue collected in Ireland," the other "the true revenue." He thought Mr. Gladstone was right when in 1886, in the debate on the Home Rule Bill, he admitted that in justice and fairness the revenue collected in Ireland ought to be entirely attributed to Ireland. He really could not understand why it should not be. What was the revenue of France or of Germany? It was the revenue collected in France or in Germany as the case might be. The revenue collected in the British Empire was the revenue of the British Empire. But in the case of Ireland alone, Ireland which, notwithstanding all they might say to the contrary, was divided from them in such a way that it could never be part of the Empire in the same way as Wiltshire was—in the case of Ireland alone they adopted the device of deducting what was paid by consumers in England, and the invariable result was of course to make out that they paid two millions less than they really did.

Again, the usual Return utterly misrepresented the expenditure account. The object seemed to be to attribute to Ireland all expenses which could by any possibility be regarded as incurred for Ireland, and to take off England every penny spent in England that could by any possibility be said to be collected for Imperial purposes. It was assumed—as if there could be no doubt—that the charge for the Army and Navy was an Imperial one, chargeable to the Empire at large. He could understand the charge for the maintenance of the Army being thus treated, but it was different in the case of the millions upon millions spent upon the construction of ships, guns, and armour-plate. That money was spent in five or six English and Scotch shipbuilding ports and dockyards, it was spent upon English, Scotch, and Welsh workmen, it went into English, Scotch and Welsh pockets, and with it were purchased food and clothing—the necessaries of life—in English, Scotch and Welsh establishments. In what way could that be called Imperial expenditure? It ought to be set down, not to the account of the Empire, but to the account of England, Scotland, and Wales. Look at the way in which the charge for the Constabulary in Ireland was treated. Really it was a strictly Imperial charge, and evidence was given before the Financial Relations Commission to the effect that Mr. Goschen, hard as he was towards Ireland himself, stated that the Constabulary charge amounting to £1,600,000 a year ought to be set down to the account of the Empire, and not to the account of Ireland only. Having regard to these facts the Returns were seriously at fault, and the sooner they were abandoned altogether the better, unless steps were taken by the Government to put them on a proper basis.

It was absolutely plain, nevertheless, that Ireland was paying too much in proportion to the other parts of the United Kingdom. He had no intention to debate this question at great length. It seemed to him to have been settled for ever by the Royal Commission of 1894. That Commission had been assailed on the ground that it was appointed with a view to the Home Rule Bill, and the proposals made by Mr. Gladstone for the settlement of Ireland. But really he did not see how that was an answer at all. The question was—were the figures presented by that Commission correct or not? and not whether they were prepared with the view to this or that scheme of Government policy. The question further was whether from the figures correct deductions were made? It seemed to him on this point that there was no answer at all, and no answer had ever been given. None of the figures given by the Commission had ever been assailed; in fact, he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to get up and point to any single set of figures in the Report of the majority which had been assailed at all.

The old familiar argument had been used that there could not be financial injustice inflicted on Ireland, because under the present system of taxation every man in the three kingdoms was taxed alike. In the first place, he wanted to safeguard himself by stating, as one who took his stand in this matter on the Act of Union—there were too many Unionists on the other side of the House who seemed to think it obsolete and of no account—that this plea was not pertinent. It was like a piece of evidence which might be offered at a trial, which might be true or might be false, but was ruled out by the Judge because it was not relevant to the issue. What was the use of advancing this plea when the principle of separate treatment for Ireland was embodied in the Act of Union as the only principle on which the taxation of Ireland ought to be regulated? It was embodied again in the Act of 1816, which amalgamated the Exchequers of Ireland and Great Britain. The Act of 1816 declared that the taxation of Ireland and of Scotland was subject to certain exemptions and abatements. That principle was actually recognised for a great part of the first half of last century by successive British Ministers. In 1842, and again in 1845, Sir Robert Peel refused to extend the income-tax to Ireland on the very ground that Ireland was entitled to exemption from this tax; he did so on account of the enactments of 1800 and 1816. It was nonsense to say that this theory of separate treatment was either new-fangled or wrong. It was recognised in 1864 by a Conservative Administration when they appointed a Committee on the subject. It was recognised by the Chairman of that Committee, Sir Stafford Northcote, who made a remarkable Report, in which he said that Ireland was the most heavily taxed and Great Britain the most lightly taxed country in Europe, notwithstanding that both were nominally subject to the same taxation. Sir Stafford Northcote did not repudiate the obligations laid upon British Ministers and British politicians by the Acts of 1800 and 1816, nor did the Government who appointed the Committee. Even so late as 1890 the very work which the Royal Commission was set to do a few years later by Mr. Gladstone, namely, to take account of what way Ireland ought to be separately treated, was entrusted by Mr. Goschen, the Unionist Chancellor of the Exchequer, to a Committee, in the reference framed to aid the Committee which was appointed, but never met, to investigate this question. The answer, therefore, that no injustice was done because everybody was taxed alike was not pertinent to the issue. But more than that, it was not true.

He would take those who urged this argument on their own ground. It was obvious that it could not be true as long as Ireland and Great Britain were dissimilar in circumstances and in resources. He thought he was stating the case as plainly and correctly as possible when he said that a common system of taxation as applied to countries dissimilar in circumstances and resources did not necessarily mean equality of burden. Take the case of rates on property. When a common system was applied to countries dissimilar in circumstances and resources—great properties the rule in the one, small in the other—equal rates on both pressed more heavily on the latter than on the former, because they took away a greater proportion of the surplus income. Surely that was perfectly plain. He would read, for the information of anyone who doubted this, the statement made by Sir Robert Giffen before the Financial Relations Commission—

> "It is not the same thing to take £2 from the man who has £40 a year, as to take £4 from a man who has £80, or £40 from a man who has £800. The sacrifice is greater upon the man from whom you take £2 out of £40 than it is upon the man from whom you take £40 out of £800, although the proportion is the same."

In the case of taxes on dutiable commodities the case was absolutely worse for they acted without any regard at all to disparity in income. If the poor consumed as much as the rich they paid actually as much as the rich; the poorer country gave up a larger part of its income than the richer, because it had less surplus income. Therefore, he contended that this system, so far from equalising taxation, might, and as a matter of fact did, work the greatest possible injustice to Ireland. Under the system of indiscriminate taxation the man living in Mayfair paid, forsooth, the same as the unfortunate Connaught peasant for his tobacco, though the one had £10,000 a year, while the other had to support himself and his family on ten shillings a week. Yet it was said that no injustice was done to the Connaught peasant. In his opinion the unfortunate peasants in the West of Ireland ought not to be taxed at all. Every frank economist admitted that what ought to be taxed was the surplus income, and that the people must be allowed enough to live on before their taxation began; otherwise they would not live and there would be no taxation at all. What a monstrous thing it was that the unfortunate peasants in the West of Ireland, labourers who on an average earned ten shillings a week, should be put on a par in regard to taxation with the millionaires in Park Lane and Mayfair! But that was the necessary result of so-called equal and indiscriminate taxation; and the reason why it hit Ireland more heavily than England was perfectly obvious, namely, that Ireland contained a vastly larger number of poor than England.

Again, if the articles selected for taxation were used only in one, or were used in one more generally than in the other, that one country was hit, and the other escaped, though both were nominally liable to the same taxation. That was exactly what had happened in the case of Ireland as compared with Great Britain. From 1853 down to 1860 what was done? The House of Commons selected whisky, which was the national beverage of Ireland, for taxation, and left out beer, which was the national drink of England. There were the same duties on whisky and beer in both, but would any candid man say that they hit the two countries in the same way? This equal and indiscriminate taxation argument seemed to be infected with the essential vice that so long as the circumstances of the country on which it was imposed were not taken into account, it ever touched the poor and let the rich get off. The result was—and he thought that this fact ought to be really conclusive as to the injustice of the present system of taxation—that, according to the admission of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in answering a Question put to him on the subject of the taxation raised in England, one-half was borne by indirect taxation and one-half by direct taxation; but in Ireland the figures were 72 per cent. from indirect taxation and 27 from direct taxation.

Well, the general trend of all this was summed up in a passage which he would take the opportunity of reading from the Report of the Financial Relations Commission—he meant the Report signed by the majority of the Commissioners. It was a passage which any candid Englishman ought to be ashamed of. It was as follows—

> "The general effect of the change in fiscal policy has been to abolish nearly all duties on raw material of manufacture and articles of food, and to substitute direct taxation upon income and property, together with duties on a small number of imported articles and on alcoholic drinks. The articles selected for these duties—tobacco, tea, and spirits, are those most largely used by the population of Ireland, while the articles freed from duty were so freed mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of Great Britain."

That passage remained on record, and could not be contradicted; and yet the English Government went on piling taxation on Ireland, relying on the assumption that so long as each man paid the same rate of duty on tea, tobacco, and spirits, there could not be any injustice done, in spite of the fact that the one country presented a totally different set of circumstances from the other. He heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Prime Minister last year declare that, large as was the taxation which this country was called upon to bear in consequence of the South African War, it was better able to bear it than even the taxation of forty years ago. Could anybody pretend that that could be said of Ireland? Its population had been reduced by one-half in fifty years, until now it was less than it was at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and only what it was at the time of the Union. He doubted if, in the dominions of the Turk, there could be found a single country of which that could be said. And the Irish people were still going. A Return appeared a few weeks ago, from which it appeared that the emigration of labourers from Ireland, during the first four months of this year, was 1,000 more per month than in the corresponding four months last year. And why did they go? Surely they would not go if they could earn their bread at home. It was because there was no hope of their attaining to prosperity in their native land. Curiously enough, the fact that Ireland was not improving, but, on the contrary, going back, was proved by the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a Question put to him that very day as to the receipts from the income-tax during the past five or six years. He had not had time to examine the figures very carefully, but it was plain that, notwithstanding the increase in the rate of the income-tax, the actual produce of the tax had decreased. That clearly showed that the resources of Ireland were declining. Now, he really thought that treatment of this kind, and under these circumstances, betrayed a hard-heartedness and callousness which could not be too severely condemned. For his part, he had not words in which he could sufficiently condemn it by the use of Parliamentary language.

Before he sat down he wanted to mention a fact which he had discovered from the Inland Revenue Returns of last year. The fact concerned the repayment into the local taxation account from the Imperial Exchequer of the proportion of the Excise license duties. Many years ago Mr. Goschen, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, made a Return showing that the amount given back, proportionate to income, to the three countries, was 80 per cent. to England, 11 per cent. to Scotland, and 9 per cent. to Ireland. He was inclined to think at the time that Ireland was, as usual, being cheated; and he was not yet sure that Ireland was not. But Ireland had been treated worse since. The system of repayment had been changed and the three countries got back the produce of certain Excise duties. England got back at the same rate as before; but it turned out that the licences which were selected for that purpose were most fruitful in England and least fruitful in Ireland. The result was that, whereas Ireland was getting 9 per cent. before of what was paid in, she was now, under the revised system, only getting 4½ per cent. instead of 9 per cent. He would like the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to explain why that should be so.

There were, he warned the right hon. Gentleman, other Questions to be answered; because, if he was rightly informed, England was getting a great deal too much and Scotland a great deal too little even under the law as it stood. What he had been saying was but the latest chapter—not the last, he supposed—of a disgraceful story more than a century old. One hundred and five years ago one of the fraudulent devices by which it was sought to impose the Union project upon the intellect of Ireland was a series of promises that it would be of vast material benefit to Ireland, inasmuch as, amongst other reasons, Ireland would be equitably taxed. It was to be taxed, according to Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Pitt, in the proportion then prevailing. Then the British taxpayers in Great Britain paid annually about £3 per head, the Irish taxpayers only 10s. The British rate had since declined to £2 1s. per head, while that of Ireland had increased from 10s. to all but £2 per head, and this, too, though in the same time the population and resources of Ireland had both declined, while the population of Great Britain had more than trebled, and her wealth, in all its various forms, had far outstripped that advance. No wonder that Ireland's connection with Great Britain by means of the Union had brought Ireland, not the increase of wealth which was to follow in the wake of the Union, but ever increasing poverty. No wonder that Irish industries had been well nigh extinguished. No wonder that its people fled from their own land as from a plague spot. No wonder that the last century witnessed two or three famines and many periods of acute distress. No wonder that many Irishmen, knowing the real causes of those calamities, should think it blasphemy to style them visitations of Providence. No wonder they should be inclined to think of some British statesmen as more deserving of such denunciations as those uttered by Cicero of the plunderer of Sicily than was Verres himself. For his own part, he thought less hardly of the direct and brutal suppression of Irish industries 200 years ago than he did of the various indirect, ingenious, underhand, and mean devices by which the same end had been attained in more civilised times. Nor could he view without disgust the expression by British statesmen at the present time of a vicarious repentance for the injustice inflicted by their predecessors who were long since dead, while they seem utterly blind to the equally gross injustice inflicted by themselves.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House, having regard to the unjust financial treatment to which Ireland has been for many years subjected, with disastrous results to that country, declines to read a second time this Bill, which contains no proposal for effectually remedying that grievance, and does contain provisions which would continue it."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. ELLIOT (Durham) said the mover of the Amendment had denounced the financial relations between Ireland and England. He had talked as if Irishmen were leaving their country as a pest-house, as if everything was failing, the country going down hill; as if there was no prosperity anywhere; as if it were all due to the gross and unjust treatment in financial matters of Ireland by Great Britain. He begged to traverse that statement altogether. Every Return showed that Ireland was advancing. Savings Bank balances were increasing, and although the income-tax did not show the rise that it ought to show that was due to the change from big to small proprietors.

Mr. CLANCY retorted that that point was answered last year, when it was argued that the money must be invested, and the income-tax, if not paid out of property, was payable out of dividends.

Mr. ELLIOT maintained that his point was a good one, and asked where the moneys were now invested. He admitted that the population of Ireland was less now than it was fifty years ago, and he regretted that should be the case, but if he had to choose between seeing Ireland with a population of 10,000,000 of people, living as they used to live, and a smaller population living in a certain degree of comfort, he should assuredly choose the latter. The hon. Member had fallen into the mistake of regarding the whole question of taxation as one between Irishmen and Englishmen, whereas it was one between the rich and the poor man. It was not a geographical question, but rather one between the occupant of a mansion in Mayfair and an inhabitant of the slums of London. The last Returns of 1903-4 showed that whilst Irishmen paid in taxation into the Imperial Exchequer £2 4s., the Englishman paid £3 12s. Hon. Members ought frankly to face the situation. That proportion had been going on year after year, and yet they were told there was an unfair treatment of Ireland by England. Taxes to the amount of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a year were raised in England and Scotland on articles from which Ireland was exempt. For instance, there was house duty. A man living in Dublin came over to Liverpool and had to pay a tax which he had never paid before. Then there was the railway passenger duty, which with other duties falling on Scotland and England, and not on Ireland, amounted to £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a year.

Mr. CLANCY pointed out that Ireland's proportion of the £4,000,000 or

£5,000,000 was so small that it would not pay for costs of collection.

Mr. ELLIOT agreed with that view, but repeated that Ireland escaped duties which had to be paid by England and Scotland.

Mr. CLANCY: Yes, we are saved from paying taxes on armorial bearings. There are none.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) asked who paid the railway passenger duty in England.

Mr. ELLIOT agreed that the duty was paid by the railway companies, but the money was extracted from the pockets of English taxpayers and not from Irish pockets. In all those exempted taxes amounted to £4,000,000 or £5,000,000, and he put that forward as a point to be considered. The hon. Member had astounded him when he talked about the waste of the revenue, and the injustice in Ireland being called upon to contribute to the Imperial Navy.

Mr. CLANCY: I might have said that, but I did not say it.

Mr. ELLIOT said the hon. Member could not deny that the Irish taxpayers were interested in the Imperial Navy inasmuch as they received the benefit of the services of that Navy. They doubtless were perfectly loyal citizens of the United Kingdom, and as such enjoyed the benefits of the Navy and the Army. He therefore failed to see why they should not contribute to the maintenance of the Imperial Forces. He could quite conceive that a proportional system fixing the amount of revenue might be a reasonable view if they were going to recur to the old system of making the United Kingdom a federation of States, but the very basis of the Treaty of Union looked forward to putting an end to a system of proportionate contribution as absolutely unsuited to a state of things where men were citizens of the same State and subject to the same Imperial Government and taxing authority. It seemed to him that as between man and man there was no case whatever for the contention of the hon. Gentleman. Let them regard it for a moment from the point of view of the Imperial Exchequer. Was it right that Ireland should contribute to the Imperial Exchequer for anything save Irish expenditure. Surely she ought. She ought to contribute to the Imperial expenditure just as much as England and Scotland had to contribute to it. If the Report of the Royal Commission was carried out and the sum of £2,250,000 or £2,500,000 a year was paid from the Imperial Exchequer to Ireland the result would be that Ireland would contribute nothing to the Imperial Exchequer; but, on the contrary, because at present she only contributed £2,200,000 to the Imperial expenditure outside purely local Irish expenditure. It was of no use to come to an Imperial Assembly like this and suggest that we should subsidise Imperial expenditure in Ireland, because that was what it came to when it was suggested that the Imperial Exchequer should pay a contribution of £2,500,000 to Ireland, which only contributed £2,200,000 to our Imperial expenditure. The most valuable part of the Report of the Royal Commission, which showed great industry and ability on the part of those who framed it, was the recommendations as to what should be done to remedy this state of things. If ever there was a *reductio ad absurdum* in this world it was those recommendations. One was to take off the taxation of Ireland and put it on to England and Scotland, the second was to alter the duties on the commodities as against the other two countries. If that were done, it would necessitate the revival of the old system of Custom-houses between Ireland, Scotland, and England, and surround Ireland with a great wall. Did anyone suppose it was possible, even if it was desirable, to go back to such a system?

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said the system of Custom-houses was only abolished in 1858.

Mr. ELLIOT said his point was it was not possible to revive the system, the hon. Gentleman, at all events, would agree that it was highly undesirable.

Mr. O'MARA said he certainly did not agree to anything of the sort.

Mr. ELLIOT said then the hon. Member would find himself in a minority when they came to vote upon the matter.

Mr. O'MARA said so long as he had sat in the House he always had been in a minority.

Mr. ELLIOT said he had no desire to argue with the hon. Member. All he said was that, first of all, hon. Members opposite had to make out a case of gross injustice, and that, in his opinion, they had failed to do. Coming to the special remedies, he thought it would be quite impossible to revive the system of Custom-houses between Ireland and England; the more communication there was between the two countries, the better for both. When this question was looked into, item by item, they found that Ireland gained considerably by her financial relations with Great Britain. If they looked up the Returns they would find that the postal and telegraphic system in Ireland was run at a loss, which meant that the penny postage and the sixpenny telegraphic system was only rendered possible in Ireland by her interests being bound up with those of a richer country than herself. What was one of the most valuable gifts which the United Kingdom could make to other parts of the Empire which were poor, as Ireland was, unfortunately? It was the advantage of her credit. And that Ireland had, and enjoyed the full benefit of, quite as much as, if not more than, any other part of the United Kingdom. The great system of loans to the peasantry was only made possible by the credit of Great Britain, and the fact that there was only one system of taxation. Ireland might have been unjustly treated in the past, but he did not think her grievances were due to any closeness or niggardliness on the part of Great Britain. He denied that the United Kingdom had ever shown, in her relations with Ireland or Scotland, or her Colonies, anything like stinginess. The principles adopted in Ireland were the only principles that could be adopted between man and man, and it was because he believed that those were the only principles that could be adopted towards Ireland that he said that when they abrogated those principles and dealt instead with the principle of the financial entity of Great Britain and the financial entity of Ireland that they left the straight and solid path which led to good results. The system suggested by the hon. Gentleman opposite might be, and probably was, the best that might be adopted in the case of federated States, but it was quite unsuitable in the case of Ireland and this country. While we remained one people and remained subject to one Imperial taxing authority, and wished to have justice done between man and man, and to base finance on sound financial lines, we must look at the true facts, and must see that Ireland, Scotland, and England, the rich countries and the poor, all got justice. Those were the lines, and the sole lines, upon which we could make any bargain.

*Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had given the House the usual stereotyped argument which ignored all facts and figures. He had heard that kind of argument over and over again. According to the hon. Member they had to ignore everything, the findings of the Royal Commission, the history of the case, and all the facts of recent history. It seemed almost hopeless to address any argument to an otherwise alert mind like that of the hon. Gentleman when he ignored and befogged everything that had been done. Did the hon. Member or any hon. Member opposite mean to revive the exploded fallacy which was published in the Unionist Press when the findings of the Royal Commission were published; namely, that it was the extravagant expenditure which was the justification for the existing taxation. If that were so, if the argument in favour of quoting a figure as a contribution was a just one, all that they would have to do would be to double the number of Judges in Ireland, to increase the numbers of the Constabulary, to make extravagant increases in salaries and so forth all over the place, and the question was solved. But the hon. Member opposite was not alone in that line of argument, because in the debate of last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer bombarded the House with a set of new figures, drawn from nobody knew where, based upon an absolutely fallacious argument, and from that day to this the right hon. Gentleman had done nothing whatever to substantiate the figures he then put forward. The last Treasury Return was one which the Irish people could not accept, and in regard to which the House ought to be sceptical, inasmuch as there were no means of testing it.

A large portion of the Irish case must depend on the Report of the Royal Commission, which hon. Members opposite desired to discredit because it was appointed in connection with the question of Ireland's contribution in a possible scheme of Home Rule. But the fact that the Commission was appointed *ad hoc* in reference not to a political issue, but to the financial side of that issue, did not invalidate its testimony or discredit its findings, or, above all, displace the invaluable evidence given by Treasury officials themselves. The figures upon which eleven out of the thirteen Commissioners based their findings were supplied by men of the type of Sir Edward Hamilton and Sir Robert Giffen, and they had never been disproved. The Government did not accept the findings of that Commission, but promised to appoint another body to inquire how the expenditure on Irish local services contrasted with similar expenditure in England and Scotland, and to what exemptions and abatements Ireland might be entitled. Surely that was a recognition of the doctrine of a fiscal entity.

The figures given by the Treasury last July simply brought the sad story up to date, showing a steady and constant increase in the amount drawn from Ireland, but revealing the alarming anomaly that the more Ireland contributed in tax revenue the smaller was her percentage of the total contribution. That, however, was largely due to the enormous and increasing expenditure of Great Britain to which the Irish people had never given their assent. It was unnecessary to discuss whether or not the South African War was justifiable, he thought it was most unjustifiable; the fact remained that it cost between £200,000,000 and £300,000,000, of which Ireland had had to bear her share. In 1893–94 the amount of tax revenue drawn from Great Britain was £75,796,000, and from Ireland £7,568,000, or 9·08 per cent. as compared with Great Britain; six years later the amounts were £117,385,000 and £8,664,000 respectively, or a percentage of 7·38 from Ireland; in 1902–3, Great Britain's contribution was £146,400,000, and Ireland's £10,205,000, or 6·98 per cent., while according to the last published Returns, the amount drawn from Great Britain was £137,184,000 and from Ireland £9,748,000, a percentage of 7·35. Whence, then, did the hon. Member for Durham get his 2·3 per cent?

MR. ELLIOT said the 2·3 would be found on page 19 of Return No. 225.

*MR. FLYNN replied that the Irish people could not accept the figures of that Return at all, as they were based on a fallacious doctrine long since exploded. The Commission reported that Ireland was over taxed to the extent of £2,500,000 per annum, and until the Treasury appointed another Commission of financial experts and upset the figures upon which that finding was based, the House was bound to accept it. According to the figures he had just given, Irish taxation in ten years had increased by £2,500,000, though the percentage of her contribution had fallen by 1·73. According to the income-tax returns for the last financial year, the amount charged in England was £29,554,000, and in Scotland £3,101,000, a total of £32,655,000, while Ireland was charged £1,207,536, representing only 3·7 per cent. Therefore on the most favourable basis of taxation, the utmost that Ireland ought to be called upon to pay was 3·7 per cent. of the revenue. Under Schedule D, which more accurately reflected the resources of the people than the statement as a whole, England was charged £16,828,000, Scotland £2,078,000, and Ireland only £497,000, or 2·63 per cent. of the whole. If 2·63, which approximately represented Ireland's ability as compared with Great Britain, were contrasted with the 7·35 which was extracted from her, the case for overtaxation was disclosed in overwhelming strength and clearness. He hoped the

Chancellor of the Exchequer in his reply, instead of repeating old and exploded fallacies, would give the House something more enlightning and informing than he did last year. Ireland's case was unanswerable, and some serious attempt ought to be made to redress her grievance. He defied hon. Members to name any other country of equal fertility which was losing its population by tens of thousands, whose fields were going out of cultivation, and whose peasantry were flying as from a plague-stricken land. Such a state of things was surely abnormal and alarming; to the Irish people it was sickening and heartbreaking. Over-taxation was one of the causes of the depopulation and impoverishment of Ireland, and steps ought at once to be taken to remedy the financial grievance under which that country laboured.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said it was no use talking about Irish contributions. They had got a United Kingdom, and under that government it was possible to have a system of taxation which would be perfectly fair to the Irish people. He was ready to grant that the existing system of taxation was not fair to the Irish people, but its unfairness was not because they were Irish, but because they were poor, and the same system was equally unfair to poor Scotchmen and Englishmen. [A Nationalist Member: There is nothing in that.] There was something in it, because it enabled a national grievance to be made out of what was really only a class grievance. Ireland was the poorest part of the United Kingdom, and when they summed up the taxation they found that it was an unreasonable amount. The illustration given by the hon. Member who moved this Amendment, of a poor man in Connaught who smoked his pipe contributing more than his fair share as compared with the rich man in Pall Mall who smoked his cigar, was quite true, but it was equally true of poor Englishmen and Scotchmen. As long as they remained a United Kingdom, the only way in which justice could be done was by so regulating the taxation of the whole of the United Kingdom, that the rich classes should pay their fair proportion and the poor should not pay more than their fair share. Many of the indirect taxes which were imposed upon commodities were imposed in a way which was very unfair to the poor, and therefore it was unfair to Ireland, and that, he understood, was the argument of the hon. Member for Durham.

What they required was that indirect taxation should be fairly distributed throughout the United Kingdom. There was an idea that whisky was taxed more than beer, and if that could be proved he should be willing to see that injustice redressed. He thought all hon. Members agreed that at the present moment indirect taxation formed too great a proportion of the revenue raised in the United Kingdom. Twenty years ago, before all these wars and high expenditure upon the Army and Navy, no man could justly be said to be oppressed by indirect taxation, because then no working man paid indirect taxation unless he drank, or smoked, or indulged in that pernicious fluid tea. If he abstained from all those luxuries then he paid nothing at all, and he did not pay much now except in regard to sugar. What the Irish representatives ought to demand was a reduction of indirect taxation and further relief on those articles which were the subject of food and consumption by the Irish people and the poor Scotch and English people. That could only be done by a great reduction in the general expenditure of the country, and after the speech of the Prime Minister he thought they would all be looking forward with some hope towards a very great reduction in their military expenditure. Then they would be able to take the tax off sugar, reduce the tax on tea, and possibly on whisky, and thus the poor Irishman, as a member of the United Kingdom, would obtain an alleviation of the injustice from which he was now suffering, without any disturbance of the present Constitution under which England, Scotland, and Ireland were bound together.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that what the Irish Members complained of was that Ireland had been overtaxed since the Union. It was not only a question of the immediate present, but they had also to consider the immense restitution which was due to them from the past.

At the time of the Union Ireland was perhaps the most lightly-taxed country in Europe, as she was not concerned in foreign wars. Under the terms of the Union it was definitely stipulated that she should be always recognised as a separate taxable entity, to be taxed only in ratio to her resources, with certain exemptions to be allowed. This fact had been proved by the Financial Relations Commission inquiry, and was also further substantiated by the pamphlets and proceedings of the All Ireland Financial Reform League. Therefore he would not trouble the House with details, as the contract terms could not be denied. Under the Act of Union it was distinctly laid down that the Irish and British Exchequers were to be kept separate until such time as a certain ratio was reached, when the Exchequers might be amalgamated and another system would more conveniently allow the over taxation of Ireland to any extent desired by the English Chancellors. This increase in what was called the National Debt of Ireland was easily managed by the expert financiers of the British Treasury, so that after the expensive Napoleonic wars it was accomplished.

In order to explain the motives and manipulations which led up to the amalgamation of the Irish and British Exchequers, it was necessary to quote the official figures of the intervening years that elapsed between the Union and amalgamation. On January 5th, 1801, the British debt was £450,504,984, and the annual charge £17,718,134; the Irish debt was £28,545,134, and the annual charge £1,244,463. On January 5th, 1817, after amalgamation, the British debt was £734,527,104, and the annual charge £28,238,416; the Irish debt was then £112,704,514, and the annual charge £4,094,514. This showed whilst the Imperial Government did not double the British debt they quadrupled the Irish debt. By this manipulating amalgamation the Irish debt which in 1801—even after adding the cost of conveying the Union — had been as to the British one to sixteen and a-half, was forced up to bear to the British debt the ratio of one to seven and a-half. It was difficult to understand upon what grounds the Irish people were compelled to share in the liability for this enormous National Debt now amounting to £800,000,000. The Irish people were not consulted, and they derived no advantage from foreign wars to which they were generally opposed, and they did not receive any benefit from naval or military expenditure. All that money was spent outside Ireland, where they had not even a receiving depôt, and all that now was mainly utilised to protect the mercantile marine, which reduced the price and demand for Irish produce, and yet they had to pay more than their share to maintain the Navy and Army. Meantime the colonists, who supplied our markets and took our manufactured goods, contributed scarcely any appreciable amount for their defence. Why not ask them to pay their fair share towards the ever-increasing cost of the Army and Navy, and relieve Ireland to the extent of their contribution? He submitted this practical suggestion to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Colonies had prospered because they controlled their own finances. India, and Ireland had been plundered and pauperised because the power of the purse remained in the British Parliament. Just as in India, the systematic and continuous policy of over-taxing the Irish people and sending the money outside the country obviously created an insurmountable obstacle to progress and prosperity.

Men and money were the twin wheels upon which progression proceeded. Irish money was absorbed by investments, and their men were leaving the land of their birth where God intended they should reside, if permitted by equitable laws and paternal administration. About the period of the Union the population of Ireland to that of Great Britain was as two was to five. Now it was not much over one-ninth. England was jealous of the prosperity of Ireland under a native Parliament even though it was composed of Protestants. But when the amalgamation of the Exchequers was proposed and passed, certain safeguards were inserted, and officials to look after Irish interests were to be appointed. He would quote from Statutes at Large, 56 George III., 1816, Vol. 56, an Act which was passed on July

1st. It contained the following provisions—

> "Consolidated Funds of Great Britain and Ireland shall become one Consolidated Fund; offices of Treasurer of Great Britain and Ireland shall be united, and may be executed by Commissioners; Vice-Treasurer for Ireland to have salary of £2,000—with power to appoint deputy; money shall be issued out of the Treasury of Ireland on the warrant of the Lord-Lieutenant, signed by the Vice-Treasurer and Auditor-General of His Majesty's Exchequer of Ireland; quarterly accounts of Consolidated Fund in Great Britain and Ireland shall be transmitted from each country to the other and deposited in the several Exchequers; two additional Commissioners of the Treasury to be appointed for Irish business; annual account to be laid before Parliament by the Vice-Treasurer; books and records of Irish Treasury to remain with Vice-Treasurer."

Would the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Chief Secretary enlighten the House as to what had been done regarding those provisions. One never heard of anything but the British Treasury. Two short amending Acts were passed in 1817, but none of the main provisions were changed, and, so far as he could learn, the exemptions made under the Act of Union had been disallowed, and the regulations and safeguards provided by the Act of 1816 had been disregarded. Ireland had been involved in the payment of tremendous Imperial taxations far in excess of the proportions laid down by Pitt and Castlereagh, who foretold increased trade and prosperity, but Ireland had not participated in her share of the Imperial expenditure.

Of course they would be told about grants. Let an international account be prepared showing over-taxation and grants. The Union ratio was entirely ignored by Mr. Gladstone in his 1853 Budget. Although there was a surplus he levied income-tax in Ireland, nominally for a short period, to repay an amount lent to meet famine exigencies. He did this in opposition to the opinion of Sir Robert Peel and other eminent English Chancellors, who maintained that Ireland was too poor to pay income-tax. Although the amount lent had been repaid many times over, restitution had not been given by an equivalent reduction. On the contrary, the taxation was still rising. He was not arguing for the remission of income-tax in Ireland, but he did advocate the necessity of introducing a fair system of graduated assessments—and also the need of reform in the existing mode of valuations, assessment, and collection in Ireland, where the income-tax payers, especially business and professional men, were often exorbitantly assessed, and consequently harassed, whilst the owner of land values, who did nothing, practically escaped taxation. Mr. Gladstone enormously increased the burden of taxation in Ireland before the country had recovered from the evil effects of the terrible famine, and just at the time that what was falsely called free trade, but which in reality was a system of free imports, was coming into operation and telling against Ireland. This system not alone reduced the value of Irish agricultural produce generally, but it gradually helped to deteriorate the climate and make it more humid, so that the yield of crops or live stock was not so good as formerly. Some hon. Members might not quite appreciate the connection between wet seasons and free imports. But it was recognised by meteorologists that if a country was not properly drained, was nearly all under grass, especially without a due clothing of wood, such a grassy area induced atmospheric moisture, and often rain, and it must be acknowledged that as a rule a cultivated country enjoyed a drier climate. However, let them get away from atmospheric influence, and come to the figures.

He would briefly put the case from the beginning. The King's revenue, or what was now termed Imperial taxation, was in the fourteenth century £11,000 per annum. This snowball had in the roll of ages increased to an avalanche of nearly £11,000,000. He would briefly trace its growth. In the seventeenth century, mainly by subsidies, £300,000; eighteenth century, mainly by subsidies, £650,000; 1801, beginning of nineteenth century, Union, £1,244,000; 1817, amalgamation, Exchequer, £4,004,514; 1829, amalgamation Exchequer, £4,460,000. In the Victorian era the figures were—1837, taxation, £5,175,000; population, 8,024,000; per head, 12s. 11d.; 1901, taxation, £9,505,000; population, 4,456,546; per head, 43s. In the present King's reign the figures were—1905, taxation, £10,200,000; population, 4,420,000; per head, 44s. Since 1837 the population that was the productive factor of taxation had been reduced by nearly one-half, whilst the taxation per head had been almost quadrupled. Sometimes it was alleged by sophistical surface observers that Ireland was over-populated. Let him compare the density of population per square mile in European countries. England, 505; Scotland, 135; Ireland, 132 (Scotland did not contain anything like the area of arable land that Ireland did); France, 320; Germany, 233; Italy, 260; Switzerland, a mountainous land, 190; Holland, 350; Belgium, 530, more than four times the population per square mile, and in addition Ireland had been depopulated to make room for cattle. Yet Belgium carried three times as many beasts per acre as Ireland, although Ireland had a richer soil. The difference was in the home government.

In Ireland emigration continued, and the result was that the marriage and birth rate had decreased far below those of any other civilised country. The death rate was increasing, and the proportion of the children and aged to population had increased to such an extent that even if emigration were stayed the future of the Irish race was threatened. The ratio of infirm and insane was far greater than that in any other country in the world. The land was going out of tillage, and the number of persons in receipt of pauper relief was growing greater, although the population was diminished. So that the increasing burden of taxation had to be borne by a smaller number of producers, who were also weighted with heavy local rates, which amounted to over £4,000,000 sterling per annum. He submitted that produce was the measure of national wealth, and further, that the wealth of a nation consisted in its natural products, the skill and number of its inhabitants, and the possession of transit facilities. Great Britain, as they were told by geologists, owing to the displacements of the glacial period, had more iron and coal and consequently manufactures than Ireland. England had more skill, as technical education was unknown in Ireland until recently. The population of England had trebled; of Ireland it had been reduced almost one-half. England had ten times more shipping than all the rest of the world, and competitive railways; in Ireland they had neither, yet from the poverty-stricken population of Ireland upon whom indirect taxation fell most heavily the English Government extorted 72 per cent. of indirect taxation, whilst in Great Britain it averaged only about 27 per cent.

Measured by income-tax returns Great Britain, especially England, was rich beyond all proportion as compared with Ireland. As the payment of income-tax was dependent on valuation, let him point out here that in England and Scotland there was a local authority assessment committee co-operating with the Government official. In Ireland there was a Valuation Commissioner appointed by the Crown, altogether beyond the influence of the taxpayer. If Ireland was to be revalued under this authority probably £1,000,000 a year would be added to the overtaxation of Ireland. Although identity of taxation had now proved to be unjust in application, yet identity of method should be followed under what was called Union constitutional Government. It was admitted that Great Britain drew a yearly profit of over £2,000,000 per annum from Ireland. Yet, notwithstanding the verdict of the Financial Resolutions Commission that they were over-taxed by nearly £3,000,000 sterling per annum, still the over-taxation tribute was even more rigorously exacted, and when the complaint was annually brought on for discussion they received only flippant replies and taunts about grants—which were mainly taken from Irish money. Why, everything in Ireland was starved and stunted from the want of a paternal yet economic Government. Money was wasted on soldiers who got their supplies outside Ireland. It was the same with officials, Constabulary, policemen, coercion proceeding from law officers, and secret service. This House would grant many thousands of pounds for a denominational University for the Soudanese and refuse a necessary grant for the establishment of a University for those who constituted the majority of the Irish people. At the same time arterial drainage and fisheries, re-afforesting, and cheap transit, harbours, canals—all the factors of intellectual and commercial prosperity—were neglected outside the work done by the Congested Districts Board or Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

Let it be granted that Ireland was naturally wealthy in agricultural resources, and under fair economic conditions her people would live in plenty and have ample provision during ordinary seasons against any probable diminution of her productive output in unfavourable years. But she was governed and controlled by a Power that financially and industrially absorbed her earnings in an insidious fashion by the financial drainage of overtaxation. It had been said that Ireland was drained of everything except water by England. A simple analogy would explain the situation. Suppose a farm of land which was naturally very fertile, if its produce was continually exported and consumed abroad, with nothing returning to its soil, in due course of time that farm must become impoverished. Now, the Irish people, as a whole, were almost in the position of such a holding—Ireland had been designated the drain-farm of England. No country could sustain such a steady drain of wealth without becoming impoverished. That was their position. He recognised that high taxation might even in some cases be beneficial, provided it was so levied that it drew contributions from those who would not otherwise assist in sustaining public welfare and expense. The death duties afforded a notable example. But a further special proviso should be maintained that the taxes must be spent within the country from which they were raised and not lavishly expended in paying extravagant salaries to unnecessary officials, or in maintaining unconstitutional rule. Under those conditions taxation expended in the country in which it was levied again returned to the working, distributing, professional, and official classes. But taxes exported from the country in which they were collected must be reckoned as an absolute financial loss to the community which paid the taxes so abstracted. It was recognised by eminent economists that the obligation to make heavy payments abroad had the effect of placing a country at a disadvantage throughout its foreign trade. The present commercial depression of Ireland confirmed that theory. Her foreign trade was insignificant, whilst her enforced enormous contribution to Imperial taxation together with remittances to absentee landlords were stupendous in relation to her commerce and capacity. He would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chief Secretary that in modern days oppression was mostly financial, and, if it were true that the inveterate enmities which embittered the Irish question were moderating, let the Government and this House prove it by adopting measures for the revision of valuation methods, the restitution of past overtaxation and the readjustment of future levies from Ireland. Lord Brougham, an English Lord Chancellor, declared that the true test of good government was the least cost in money and subjection. Ireland cost more to govern than any country of an almost similar size and population in the world. It was subject to a perpetual coercion, and the people were deprived of the use of arms which belonged to every free people. If England was unable to govern Ireland economically constitutionally let her grant Home Rule, and an Irish Parliament would govern a prosperous and progressive people.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) thought a very real and grievous burden as affecting Ireland had been brought forward, and he asserted that the just treatment of that country must depend upon fiscal principles. He was sure that the hon. Member for Durham would agree that the present system of indirect taxation on the necessities of life threw too heavy a burden upon the poorer classes and left the more prosperous classes without their fair share. Then it was assumed that a system of taxation which was good for one community was good for another, and it was assumed that the present system of taxation which was adopted as being good for this country—a rich, prosperous and industrial community—was necessarily good for a community where the circumstances were entirely different. That did not at all follow. It might very well be argued that the present system of taxation was so much to the advantage of our manufactories and industries in England that any harm it did to the agricultural and poorer classes was quite overborne by the advantage it conferred by developing the general and larger interests of the community. It did not follow, however, that such would be the case in a country which depended almost entirely upon agriculture. In this respect Ireland had suffered and was now suffering from our commercial policy. We had chosen a commercial policy which was good for this country, and Ireland had to take its chances of success. That policy was initiated in the seventeenth century; it was carried through the eighteenth century, when we prevented the growth of industry in Ireland for the benefit of this country; and in the nineteenth century, whatever was the effect of free-trade measures in England it certainly was damaging to Ireland. Along with that came the passionate desire for symmetry which marked the Ministers of the last century. There was no attempt to get too large a share from Ireland, but there was the question of the very greatly increased burden resting upon England which marked the years following the famine—when Ireland was unfit and incapable of having fresh burdens put upon her. It was this attempt at simplicity which was Procrustean—which made taxes the same in all countries without consideration of the circumstances of the people, which made the consequences so severely felt in Ireland.

The suffering of Ireland during the last century in the matter of its commercial prosperity was the real foundation of the whole movement in favour of Home Rule. In Scotland the Union when carried through was every bit as unpopular as ever it was in Ireland. It might have led to relations between the two countries as difficult as those existing between England and Ireland, but fortunately the Scottish people discovered the commercial advantages which the Union gave them. It was discovered that the Union opened to them a vista of prosperity in the commerce with the West Indies and other places, and that took away the whole root of bitterness and led to the happier state of feeling which had ever since prevailed. The policy chosen for England was not that which Ireland would have chosen for itself. Had that country been left free it would have developed its own industries, and by following the same path as had been taken by our Colonies it would have developed them to its own advantage.

The present policy of the Treasury of raising enormous sums by heavy taxation of the masses was one which threw upon those classes a burden far heavier than was borne by a protectionist country like Germany, which stood in amazement at our bearing taxation on articles of universal consumption. The question had been raised as to how this hardship was to be removed, and whether it could be removed by reducing the taxation upon those articles which formed the integral parts of food consumed by the poor of Ireland and reducing them to the level of protectionist Germany. At present the taxation on tea, tobacco, sugar, and spirits was too high, but if that taxation were to be reduced to one-half or one-third the grievance of Ireland would be very largely removed. The question was how could such alteration be made. It had been suggested that it could be done by a general reduction of the expenditure of the nation, but he felt not at all sanguine that such a reduction would ever take place, as the tendency was rather to increase than to reduce expenditure. It would be rather by reconsidering the whole system of taxation and ascertaining whether it could not be put on a wider basis; whether we could not raise large sums by indirect taxation on articles which were luxuries of the rich and which were consumed by those classes who could better afford to pay the taxation than could the mass of consumers. It was to that solution that he looked for a possible diminution of the Irish grievance.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he was not prepared to address the House, but he felt that he would not be acting justly to his constituents if he omitted to raise his voice against the overtaxation of Ireland. He represented a constituency which included the poorest people in a poverty-stricken country. Before entering upon the subject he wished to direct attention to the fact that during the discussion no Ulster Unionist Members had been present. There was an allegation that Ireland was being mercilessly robbed in the matter of taxation, but even the Act of Union had failed to ensure the attendance of the Ulster Unionists. If it had only been the case of Constable Anderson, the level-crossing at Portadown, the medical officership of Ballinasloe, or if they could have had a hit at Sir Antony MacDonnell, they would have been in their places. Those were matters which would have appealed to them, but when it came to matters affecting the very life of the poor and the comfort of all who lived in Ireland, the Ulster loyalists were not present. He had watched these financial relations very carefully, and he recollected perfectly well the sensation produced in June, 1896, by the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission, and how these Gentlemen acted then. They were all to be united to get justice for Ireland. They used almost to tumble over one another to find a place in the debate, and he recollected how all the Resolutions were framed in order that no violence should be done to the opinions of Ulster Unionism. Those Gentlemen, who did not really care anything about the financial relations of Ireland, had by the agitation managed very well to secure benefits in their own financial relations. They had secured by that agitation, by the Act of 1898, £350,000 of the rates being taken off the shoulders of the landlords. Mr. Rentoul was now a Judge, Mr. Dane was made a Judge, and Mr. Horace Plunkett had had justice done to him to the extent of £2,000 a year, and they now had in the empty benches opposite the proof of the interest taken in this matter by the Ulster Unionists. He hoped all this would be seen in Ireland, and that it would teach her a lesson that if they had to agitate a question that agitation should be carried through by those who were prepared to agitate it through thick and thin, and that they should have no dealings with any hon. Gentlemen opposite.

He agreed in the main with everything which the hon. Member who had preceded him had said. The hon. Gentleman's impression of the historic aspect of the question was true and correct. The only person who ought to be satisfied with this debate and with the complaints and the statements of Nationalist Members, which could not be impugned, as to the financial ruin that had been brought about in Ireland by the Union, was the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Empire. From that right hon. Gentleman's point of view the disclosures they had had were a tremendous success. From the British point of view they were a great success, though the whole question of the financial relations from the Irish point of view might be summed up in the one sentence that they were a vile, cowardly, gigantic, financial swindle. The question they were now discussing was a very large one indeed. These things began in the time of Charles II., when the cattle trade was ruined, and continued all through the eighteenth century, when every industry that Ireland possessed was destroyed. The woollen trade was destroyed, with the result that it went to America, and when the Irish Parliament succeeded in getting freedom of trade, which it had for eighteen years, because they began to get prosperous the British Government determined to destroy that. A great deal had been heard recently of the wonderful revelations in the MacDonnell-Wyndham correspondence. He thought there were quite as wonderful revelations in the Castlereagh-Cook correspondence. The Irish Members who carried the Act of Union, with the exception of seven, carried it through metallic bribes given to them by Mr. Cook.

As regards the financial relations, the House must recollect the Union as it was carried in 1800 was not a financial union. Ireland had her own Chancellor of the Exchequer at that time; she had her own Chancellor of the Exchequer until 1816, the reason being that the Irish Parliament in accepting the Union could not and would not saddle their country with English debt. At the time of the Union the English debt was £446,000,000 and the Irish debt was £28,000,000, and no one except a fool would enter into a relationship with a partner who owed so much when he, comparatively, owed so little. But even in 1800 everything was predicted which had since occurred. Sheridan said that the carrying of the Union would cause the emigration of every person of wit and wisdom, of worth, intellect, and ability, and that it would mean the imposition upon Ireland of British taxes without British prosperity and trade; a conclusion almost arrived at. Mr. Gladstone's name had been much referred to in the debate, and they all knew that Mr. Gladstone clearly saw the evil condition of poverty to which Ireland had been reduced by England's commercial policy. Before the Report of the Royal Commission was published, in March, 1888, Mr. Gladstone wrote an article on the commercial relations of England and Ireland, and he concluded that article by saying that Irishmen considered that they were robbed, and that all that he could say for himself was that when Dr. Johnson asked Irishmen not to pass the Act of Union, because if they did Ireland would be robbed by England, that advice was substantially right and true. That had no reference to what took place in the time of the Stuarts.

He was surprised not to see the Chief Secretary in his place, as in his opinion the right hon. Gentleman should be on a question like this affecting the life of the people in Ireland. What did Englishmen really think of this matter? In 1896, to the satisfaction of a Royal Commission on which there was not a single Nationalist leader except that financial genius Mr. Sexton, it was proved that Ireland was overtaxed to the extent of £2,750,000 a year, but from that day to this not the slightest relief had been given. The hon. Member for Partick had spoken of "our" taxation. The taxation was by English Members, and the imposition of burdens in defiance of Irish votes would in itself constitute an admirable cause of war. It was simple and utter plunder. When the income-tax was first imposed seventy-four Irish Members voted against it, only five or six, who were paid servitors of the Administration, voting in its favour. In an Irish Parliament a majority of one would have destroyed it. The Boer War, against which the Irish people all along protested, had added an extra £1,500,000 to their taxation. They had no power over their finance; the Irish Parliament was destroyed in order that that power might be taken from the Irish people. Viewed in that way, the existing financial relations were the most damning condemnation of the Union. He had not yet made up his mind whether he was a protectionist or a free-trader, but he was certainly a protectionist in the sense that he would protect Ireland with all his strength against the robbery of England. This was a weighty and momentous question. The appearance of the House while matters so vital to the Irish people were being discussed was most disheartening. It proved what a fraud the Union was. The Act was not administered for the benefit of the Irish people. For years everything in the Union favourable to England had been pressed to the utmost, and everything which told in favour of Ireland had been ignored. The whole proceeding was so contemptible and heartrending that there were very few Irishmen but felt that if the opportunity came it would be their bounden duty to get rid of a system which had been a complete tissue of fraudulent transactions between a strong country and a poor people who had been forced into an abominable and degrading bondage.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said it was very satisfactory to him as an English Member who sympathised in a general way with the Irish view of this case to find how differently it was treated by hon. Members opposite, and what a conflict of opinion there was in regard to it. The Member for Partick advocated a policy of protection for Ireland. With a good deal that he said about the history of the question he was in cordial agreement. He did not propose to follow him in his argument for protection, but would merely point out that when evenings were set apart for the discussion of the protectionist question it would be just as well that he should be in his place to take part in the debate and show how that question affected Ireland. He was sincerely sorry to hear the tone of the hon. Member for Durham's speech. The substance of his remarks was that individuals were taxed, and, if the same tax was levied on different individuals it must be fair; that Ireland, as a matter of fact, was not quite so heavily taxed as England, because in Ireland there were no house duties, and no establishment licences and other taxes, and, so far as could be judged from his argument, he really believed that Ireland ought to be more heavily taxed than it was at the present time. The Member for Cambridge University took a very different and a much wiser line. He said that whilst he agreed it was a question of the taxation of the individual, he believed the present taxation of Ireland was unfair, simply because the individuals in Ireland were poor, and because, relatively to them, the individuals in this country were rich. He argued that the system of taxation ought to be altered, so that more would fall upon the rich and less upon the poor. He (the speaker) admitted that if more taxation were levied upon the rich and less upon the poor, Ireland would inevitably benefit. But there was the geographical question which the right hon. Gentleman ignored. There was also the question of the enormous increase of taxation in Ireland between 1850 and 1860, and there was further the other side of the account—the question of expenditure. That was really the question affecting Ireland as to which there ought to be a very serious reduction. Relatively there was far more spent in Ireland on government than in England or Scotland. In regard to these matters different opinions were held by Gentlemen opposite, and if this question were more pressing it would prove another bone of contention among the Unionist Party. He considered that was a favourable omen for those who sympathised with the Irish view of the question.

Coming to his own view of the question, he was struck firstly by the enormous weight of financial authority behind the Report of the Commission of 1896. Excluding altogether Irish opinion, whether Unionist or Nationalist, and even Mr. Hunter, the late Member for Aberdeen, a strong advocate of the principle of taxable capacity, there still remained recognised financial authorities such as the late Mr. Childers, the late Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, the late Mr. Bertram Currie, and Sir David Barbour, all of whom agreed that Ireland was overtaxed under the then existing conditions.

Mr. ELLIOT: Not Sir David Barbour, I think.

Mr. Emmott.

Mr. EMMOTT: I think he agreed that Ireland was overtaxed, but he thought the expenditure was a set-off.

Mr. ELLIOT: He said that, looking at both sides of the revenue, Ireland was well off.

Mr. EMMOTT said that was really the set-off argument, but for the moment he was dealing with the one side. The only authority who took the opposite view was Sir Thomas Sutherland, and he was a business man rather than a financial expert. According to every sign by which the prosperity of a nation could be judged, Ireland was either advancing much more slowly than England or, indeed, actually going back. The income-tax returns bore testimony to the slow progress of assessments in Ireland as compared with this country, while in the matter of population there was admittedly an enormous decrease.

Mr. ELLIOT said he had never suggested that the progress in Ireland was equal to the progress in England.

Mr. EMMOTT suggested that if the hon. Gentleman, who was a good free-trader, would look up his free-trade arguments and apply them to Ireland, he would probably find it much more difficult to sustain his case; he would have to call in another set of arguments altogether. With regard to the set-off argument, England dictated the expenditure of Ireland and, therefore, had no right to throw it in the teeth of Ireland that a great deal more was spent in that country. The expenditure was not only dictated by England, but administered by Dublin Castle, by the forty-one detached and semi-detached boards, and very often in opposition to Irish wishes. As to the depopulation argument, it was no answer to say that in the rural districts of England the population was much less than it used to be. In England there were compensations. The men who left the rural districts often went to the towns, earned better wages, and made a much larger return to the revenue of the country than before. In Ireland they did not go into the towns, but crossed the seas, and ceased to make any contribution to the revenue of the country. In highly-protected France and free-trade Denmark this depopulation had not taken place, and therefore they must look for some other reason.

As there were other speakers desirous of following him, he would not intrude further upon the time of the House. In conclusion, however, he wished to ask what was the Government going to do? The Chancellor of the Exchequer last year said that, if economies could be made in Ireland, he was perfectly willing that the money saved should be devoted to Irish purposes. But how could lavish expenditure be got rid of and such savings be made until they called in the Irish people to take part in the administration of Irish affairs? With regard to the Dunraven scheme, that had been described by the Solicitor-General as a fatuous scheme, but at any rate the kind of opinion which was at the back of that scheme was a healthy sign of the times, and it had the advantage of being an increasing opinion, while the opinion of the Solicitor-General upon this subject was a decreasing one.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): There is no opinion behind it now.

MR. EMMOTT said he was speaking of the temperate mind in which that scheme was formed, and the desire to cease useless wrangles and endeavour to do something useful for Ireland in which the Irish people themselves could take a part. In this country they were getting sick of these eternal wrangles. The misgovernment of Ireland was abundantly proved from year to year on the floor of this House, but they would never remedy it until they got rid of the lavish and extravagant expenditure in Ireland, and until they called in Irish opinion and Irish sentiment to help them. He agreed with the mover of this Amendment that it was not for them to propose any specific settlement. The point was: did hon. Gentlemen opposite acknowledge the grievance? Some of them did, and some did not, but if more of them would acknowledge it, then they might be able to put their heads together and endeavour to find some effective remedy.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said he thought that, without any disrespect to the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, some of the most interesting speeches that had been made upon it had come from English Members. He did not think the contribution made by the hon. Member who had just spoken had helped them much; he gathered that the hon. Member was not so much concerned with the financial relations which existed between the different parts of the United Kingdom as with the proposal to return to that separation of political interests which had twice been before that House, but which the majority in this country had never been willing to support.

MR. EMMOTT said he did not deal with the figures as he should have liked, being anxious to compress his remarks.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he recognised the difficulty under which the hon. Member had been speaking. The hon. Member for Donegal told them that on this occasion he would speak from his heart rather than from his head; that perhaps accounted for some of the views of history which he sketched, but he hoped it did not account for the rather violent language which the hon. Gentleman addressed to other hon. Members who represented the sister isle. The most remarkable feature of the hon. Gentleman's speech was the sympathy he expressed with the very interesting speech of his hon. friend the Member for Partick, and it was a curious and noticeable fact that, as far as he was aware, that was the only speech made by an English Member which had received any approval from the Irish Benches opposite. Other hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen representing English constituencies had contributed to the discussion, but they had not in the solution they had put forward been fortunate enough to win the support of the hon. Gentlemen opposite.

The hon. Member for Dublin, in moving his Amendment, departed somewhat from the course he had usually followed in discussing this question by challenging the whole basis of the Returns known as the Fnancial Relations Returns. The hon. Gentleman alluded to the fact that they were discussing this question this year too early for the Return to be in the hands of Members, but said that was of the less consequence since, in the first place, the principle on which the Return was constructed had varied from year to year, and had been varied, the hon. Gentleman was inclined to think, by Treasury officials or by Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench, always to the detriment of Ireland and in such a way as to make the case against the United Kingdom less strong or more weak than it would otherwise appear. The hon. Gentleman spoke of there having been a change from the principle on which it was constructed last year; that was an entire misconception. There was a change in the proportions of consumption of certain dutiable articles allocated between the two countries, and a change in the proportions of taxation, but there was no change in the principle on which the Return was made. More accurate information had been obtained than was previously available, and they had modified the proportions between the two countries accordingly. He thought the hon. Gentleman himself would see that, even if the Returns obtained in 1893–4 showed what was the true consumption in Ireland, or the true proportion of direct taxation paid by the people domiciled in Ireland, those proportions would not be likely to remain exactly true for the space of more than ten years, especially with the falling population which had been alluded to. But that was not all. At that time the returns were hurriedly collected, for the information was required in haste, and the observations extended over only a short portion of the year. Accordingly, in taking new returns a couple of years ago the observations were extended over the whole year, and in other ways greater efforts made to secure accuracy. That was the change, and the only change, which had been made in the Return; it was not a change in principle.

Then the hon. Gentleman contended that the true contribution of Ireland to the Exchequer was the amount of revenue collected in Ireland, just as the revenue of France or Germany was the revenue collected in France or Germany. It must be clear, he thought, to every one who considered for a moment, that as long as we were the United Kingdom, with a single fiscal policy, a single Exchequer, and a single system, Customs and every revenue duty which, if we had two separate systems, would be paid by people dwelling in this country might now be collected in Ireland. There was, for instance, duty paid on tobacco which was manufactured in Ireland, but which was smoked by people living in this country. If the hon. Gentleman were successful in dividing our finances and fiscal system, of course the payment of that due, now collected in Ireland, would be transferred to this country. But there was another side to the account in following the hon. Gentleman's calculation; they would reduce the amount which was now got as Irish contribution instead of increasing it. It had always been known, for instance, that income-tax was collected in England on certain dividends, interest on certain stocks and securities which were owned in Ireland, and in making this Financial Return on the present basis, which he believed was a fair one, they allocated as far as Ireland's contribution to the Exchequer was concerned a proportion of income-tax which was really paid by Ireland, although actually collected in other portions of the United Kingdom.

Then the hon. Gentleman said that Army and Navy expenditure as an Imperial charge common to every portion of the United Kingdom was unjust and unfair in so far as the money spent on the Army or Navy was spent in England, and he called attention to the amount of money spent in dockyards in this country. If he understood the hon. Gentleman's arguments, he said that money spent in this country, even though spent on the Navy for general purposes of national or Imperial defence, ought to be considered as specially chargeable to England, because English workpeople were employed.

Mr. CLANCY: Because England gets the benefit of it.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that every portion of the British Empire got the benefit of the Imperial Navy and Army. But, taking it on its narrowest lines, it seemed to him that it was absurd to try to weigh the relative contributions, or what should be the relative contributions, between these two portions of the United Kingdom on any such principle as that suggested by the hon. Gentleman, and certainly, whatever sympathy might be felt, from no other quarter of the House had any agreement been expressed with those proposals. He should say, with his hon. friend the Member for Durham and his right hon. friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, that it was a very material fact, though its relevance was denied by hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the taxes paid by any individual citizens in Ireland were in no case in excess of, and in some cases were less than, the taxes paid by similar citizens in this country. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin said the argument was neither pertinent nor true. It was not pertinent because, he said, it was contrary to the spirit and, indeed, to the letter of the Act of Union, which provided for "particular exemptions and abatements" if they should be required by the special circumstances of Ireland. If they had none but those words to guide them, it would be perfectly obvious, he thought, that special exemptions and abatements did not mean such a large and general exemption from taxation as the hon. Gentleman sought to secure. But the same formula was, in the same words if he remembered rightly, repeated in the Act of Union with Scotland—it was certainly repeated as towards Scotland in the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland. The language in regard to both countries was the same; but there was no such general difference between the taxation of England and Scotland and no such claim as the hon. Gentleman based on these words put forward on behalf of Scotland prior to the Act of Union with Ireland. When hon. Gentlemen opposite quoted the authors of that Act in support of their contentions, he must be permitted to read two short extracts, one from Lord Castlereagh and the other from Mr. Pitt, bearing on this subject. Lord Castlereagh, speaking in the Irish House of Commons on February 5th, 1800, said—

> "Were our expenditure common (which would happen if neither kingdom had any separate debts, or if their debts were in proportion to their ability), by no system whatever could they be made to contribute so strictly according to their means as by being subject to the same taxes equally bearing upon the great objects of taxation in both countries. Such, however, is the disproportion of debts of the two kingdoms to each other at the present time that a common system for the present is impossible."

That lent no support to the suggestion that Lord Castlereagh attached to the phrase, "particular exemptions and abatements," such a meaning as was sought to be affixed to it in Ireland. Here were Mr. Pitt's words. Speaking in the British House of Commons on April 21st, 1800, he said—

> "The object of the financial arrangement is to effect the gradual abolition of all distinction in finance and revenue between the two countries, and to accelerate the time when both countries form but one fund and pay one uniform proportion to taxes throughout each."

He thought that was conclusive as to the view taken by the authors of the Act of Union and destructive of the allegation that they intended that these "particular exemptions and abatements," which they contemplated as a possibility, were to result in any such general differentiation in the system of taxation in Ireland from that in the rest of Great Britain as had been suggested that day.

The hon. Gentleman went on to argue that this common system of taxation bore with special harshness upon Irish consumers, because it hit certain articles which were specially articles of Irish consumption. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman felt that the Irish grievance would really be reduced if they halved the whisky duty. That was an article which he described as of special Irish consumption.

MR. CLANCY: I mentioned tea also.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Tea is not more largely consumed than in this country.

MR. CLANCY: It is in proportion.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the consumption of tea per head was practically the same in the two countries. Whisky, he thought, was more largely the national beverage of Irishmen than it was of Englishmen, but the hon. Gentleman knew that the taxation on whisky was imposed not purely on fiscal grounds. There were what they called social and moral reasons which had governed the amount of taxation on that article, which had not been regarded solely from the financial point of view.

The hon. Member suggested that the mere fact that Ireland contributed a much larger proportion of the revenue collected in that country by indirect than by direct taxation was in itself sufficient to show that Ireland had a grievance, and, as he understood, paid too much. That might be an argument as to whether the fiscal system common to the United Kingdom had been always in the past, or was even now, that which Ireland, if she were left to herself, would choose as her own, or the best which could be conceived by a dispassionate inquirer investigating her situation; but he ventured to say that, whether that was the best system or not, whether the amount contributed by direct taxpayers in Ireland was in due proportion to that contributed by indirect taxpayers or not, it had no bearing on the amount of the contribution that Ireland ought to make to the common expenses of the United Kingdom.

He was bound to say that, on this point, the hon. Gentleman's speech was remarkable for a very curious omission. The hon. Member argued that Ireland paid a great deal too much. He very largely based himself on the Report of the Royal Commission on the financial relations of the two countries; but he gave no hint or indication of what was, in his opinion, the amount she ought to contribute or whether he accepted any of the theories which were put before that Commission. This was a matter of some interest, because they had had a good deal of strong denunciation of the present system and a good deal of declamation about the hardship and wrong which Ireland suffered, but they had not had a statement of what it actually was that Ireland contributed to the general expenditure of the two countries. The taxable capacity of Ireland was estimated by the Royal Commission as being, he thought, one to twenty.

Mr. CLANCY: Not exceeding one to twenty.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: As not being in greater proportion than one to twenty. What was she actually contributing at the present time to our common Imperial burdens? The actual contribution was one-forty-fifth of that of Great Britain. In 1893–4, when the Royal Commission was inquiring into the subject, it was one-thirtieth, and in the eleven years which had since elapsed it had fallen to one-forty-fifth. Could it be pretended that such a contribution to the common expenses was too much, or, if they looked at the financial question only, if they had regard only to the letter of the Act of Union, could it be contended that the rest of the United Kingdom had not taken upon its shoulders not merely as much of the common expenditure as it was its business to bear, but had not contributed greatly more than its due proportion? He would endeavour to forestall an objection which the hon. Gentleman foreshadowed in his speech when he said that he was counting as Irish expenditure much that ought not to be charged to Irish account. If, to meet that objection, he deducted from Irish expenditure the salary of the Lord-Lieutenant, half of the present cost of the Constabulary and the Dublin metropolitan police, and a third of the cost of the judiciary, still the contribution which Ireland would make to our common Imperial expenditure would be only one-thirty-fourth. The hon. Member for St. Patrick Division complained last year that his only answer was to give flippant figures. He did not know what the hon. Member meant by flippant figures; but whatever adjective the hon. Member might apply to those figures he thought they were a better test of the actual state of things than much of the language that had been used, and were worthy of the serious consideration of the House.

The hon. Gentleman who spoke last alluded to the fact that last year he expressed his concurrence in the proposal that the then Chief Secretary made to him, following a precedent set in past years, that if further economy could be made in the Irish judiciary, the sum so allocated should be, as it were, re-spent in Ireland on purposes of development or administration which might commend themselves to the Government and to the people of that country. He thought that in more branches than one of the Irish

Administration it was probable that, with the goodwill of the Irish Members, considerable economies could be made. But Irish Members were not so anxious to help the Government in the saving of Irish expenditure as they were to secure further grants from the common Exchequer to be employed in that country. [A Nationalist Member: That is not so.] The hon. Gentleman denied that, but in his short experience as Chancellor of the Exchequer he had had more commands to "stand and deliver" fresh money from the public purse than suggestions from hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the manner in which money might be saved. It would be impossible for any Chancellor of the Exchequer to undertake that the whole benefit of every economy made should always go to Ireland, and that no economy should ever result to the common Exchequer. If that system was adopted in Ireland it must be applied also to Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would no longer have power to make any economy at all. He could not make that promise in that unqualified form, although he had promised in regard to the savings in connection with the judiciary contemplated by his right hon. friend the Member for Dover that he would seriously consider with the Chief Secretary proposals, if he was able to put them forward, with a view to interesting the representatives of Ireland in securing those economies by devoting at least a portion of the accruing money to the development of purposes which had their sympathy and support. He thought they might do much practical good if they had the goodwill and support of hon. Gentlemen opposite, irrespective of politics. But to the argument for a system of separate national finance, which was based upon separatist grounds and had its birth in a separatist measure, and which was supported as the first step towards that end, he and those who thought with him could give nothing but the strongest opposition.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he would not attempt to enter into the historical portion of the subject nor to go into details of the figures which had been submitted. The main argument was a familiar one and could be disposed of briefly. It was that under the present system of taxation in Ireland, every individual paid at the rate of £2 4s., whilst in England the amount was £3 12s. per head. Consequently, the population of Ireland paid less per head than did the population of England. He would like to point out that at the time of the Union England paid close upon £4 per head, whilst Ireland paid only 12s. Since then the wealth per head of the population of England had enormously increased, and the taxation had decreased, whilst in the case of Ireland the wealth per head had considerably decreased during the same period and the taxation had increased threefold. That was the simple state of affairs, and he asked what was the explanation of it. The truth was that when the Irish nation was tacked on to a great commercial and manufacturing country they were bound to suffer. Whenever in the course of the last century the interests of Great Britain came into collision with those of Ireland, the latter always went to the wall. That was notably the case when Great Britain introduced the system of free trade, and thus laid the axe at the root of the only source of industry and wealth of Ireland. When it suited Great Britain to throw the whole burden of taxation upon subjects affecting Ireland it did so ruthlessly, the result being that whereas the wealth of Great Britain had enormously increased the population of Ireland had decreased and its taxation had trebled. Was it any wonder that the Irish felt aggrieved at the present situation? He thought Scotland had some grievance, but in these matters they had to look on broad national results. The complaints of Scotland became slight because she flourished under the Union, and during the last century her population had increased three-fold and her wealth had increased ten-fold. In the case of Ireland her population had fallen by 50 per cent., and her wealth had fallen also.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had quoted Pitt. That eminent statesman was no friend to Ireland, but he never contemplated the monstrous injustice from which that country had suffered during the last century. The wealth, population, and commerce of England had since the time of Pitt increased by leaps and bounds, whilst the wealth, population, and commerce of Ireland had absolutely decreased, therefore any idea of a common system of finance and taxation for the two countries was quite impracticable. The hon. Member for Partick had referred to the injustice put upon Ireland in the matter of taxation of the necessaries of life. He could conceive a condition of Parties in this country when they might be tempted to inflict something in the nature of revenge upon Great Britain for all the injuries she had inflicted upon Ireland. An hour might come when Ireland could inflict taxation on the food of England. It would be wiser to deal with Ireland justly before that hour arrived, and not force her to endeavour to close her markets to the world. Ireland had been brought to such a condition that she had nothing to rely upon. It suited England to open its markets to the Argentine, to Siberia, America, Canada, and elsewhere, but that did not suit Ireland, and they might be tempted to do something in the way of tariff reform. Those were the considerations aroused in his mind by the speech of the hon. Member for Partick. But what was his astonishment to hear the hon. Member for Durham deliberately say that although the progress of Ireland was not so good as the progress of Great Britain, yet everyone must admit that in wealth and prosperity its progress had been considerable. He denied that. He would not ask the House to accept his word or those of his colleagues, who as prophets of evil had been telling these things to the House for many years. He asked hon. Members to get the pamphlet written by Lord Dunraven, an Irish gentleman and landed proprietor, whose word might be accepted as that of an impartial exponent of the facts. Lord Dunraven said—

> "Year by year the country has been sinking deeper and deeper in misfortune, and now it has reached a point at which it must be decided as to whether the downward tendency is to continue to the inevitable and most melancholy end, or whether a supreme effort shall be made to lift the country out of the national bankruptcy in man-power, intelligence, and material prosperity which so imminently threatens it."

Those were solemn words to come from a member of the Unionist Party. That was his belief as to the condition of Ireland. Did the hon. Member for Durham think that satisfactory. National bankruptcy was Lord Dunraven's prophecy. Those words were written after all the flummery to which they had listened for the last ten years with regard to agricultural development and all the bogus remedies that had been applied to the deadly disease of Ireland. That was the testimony of an Irish gentleman who had taken no part in politics. The thing which had tempted Lord Dunraven to take the part in politics that he had was the condition of Ireland and the fact that it was travelling headlong to ruin. When he heard hon. Gentlemen opposite speaking of Ireland as they did, he would ask them had there been in the whole history of the civilised world a tragedy comparable with the tragedy of Ireland? In 1801 the population of Ireland was 5,395,000, in 1901 it was 4,458,000. After a century of this system of taxation, during which the population of England and Wales had nearly doubled, the population of Ireland had decreased by 1,000,000. He challenged hon. Members who talked about the advance of progress in Ireland to point to any country in the civilised world with which it could be compared.

It was idle to talk of Ireland's condition being the result of its being an agricultural country. Was not Denmark an agricultural country? What about Sweden and Norway, Wurtemburg and many of the States in the German Federation, and Holland, which was teeming with wealth; not to go to the East of Europe? What about Hungary and Roumania, all increasing rapidly, whilst here, at the very doors of Great Britain, was one of the most fertile lands in Europe wasted as by a war? He recommended hon. Gentlemen opposite to peruse a series of articles which had been appearing in the *Daily Mail* recently on the subject of Ireland. They were written by a gentleman named Kennedy who had been travelling through Ireland on behalf of that journal, a gentleman who was gifted with the remarkable genius of putting into a sentence the whole history of the country.

Mr. Kennedy described the country as he saw it, and used these words—

> "What is the matter with this country? Was there ever created a more lovely country? Why have the people left it?"

That was the first question which struck everyone who came into Ireland. The people had left it because they were under the harrow of a financial system which was imposed by a treacherous Government to destroy their prosperity. But that was only a small part of the tragedy of Ireland. An anti-emigration league had been formed which he was invited to join. He refused, because, as he said, they might as well try and brush back the Atlantic with a broom as try and stop emigration from Ireland, because the people could not live in Ireland, where the wages were starvation, and where the only industry left was ruined by the Government of this country. Ireland was a ruined country in spite of all. The parties of emigrants which had been leaving the country were ever increasing in number until, as a priest, a friend of his, wrote the other day—

> "Where is this to end? Within the last three months 127 of the flower of my flock have left my parish, and I shall soon be left with only old people and children too young to work."

The population was withering away as though struck by a pestilence. The cause was the existing financial system of evil government. The worst feature of the depopulation was that the young and strong and healthy were going away, while the refuse of the population, the idiots, the lunatics, and the diseased, who would not be accepted in America, were being left behind. Thus it came about that while the number of persons returned as lunatics in Ireland in 1851—after the famine and with a population of over 8,000,000—was one in 637, the number had increased in 1861 to one in 411, in 1871 to one in 328, in 1881 to one in 281, and in 1891 to one in 222. In Munster it was one in 152, and in Connaught one in 184. In other words, the lunatics in Ireland had increased fourfold owing to the enormous outpouring of the youth of the population. There was no greater test of the prosperity of a nation than the marriage and birth rate. The rate in Ireland used to be one of the highest in the world, it was now the lowest, below even that of France. The people who wanted to marry went to America. It was deplorable that the question should be treated in the manner adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that no British Minister could be got who would apply his mind to this matter, even from the Unionist point of view, with a large, generous, and sympathetic spirit, and make some rational attempt to remedy the appalling condition of things. Lord Dunraven also stated—

> "The broad fact is that the best in Ireland is flying elsewhere, the worst is drifting in increasing proportions to lunatic asylums, and the balance remains in Ireland of necessity rather than of choice."

That was a condition of things which really deserved the attention of Parliament, and it was largely due to unjust taxation and that unsympathetic financial system imposed upon Ireland by this country.

Why was it that Ireland's proportion of contribution to Imperial funds was growing smaller? Because the country was growing proportionately poorer. He could conceive a point at which, under the existing system, Ireland might make no contribution whatever towards Imperial Government expenses, and yet be shamefully overtaxed. The real test was how the country was going on, whether it was improving in population, wealth, trade, and all that went to make national prosperity. In all these respects Ireland was going back, and all that had been done of recent years was the merest absurdity and humbug when considered as really effective remedies.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had alluded to a pledge given in 1897 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, and since embodied in an Act, that all savings effected in the administration of Ireland should be set aside in a special fund, called the Irish development grant, and used for the benefit of Ireland. There seemed to be an inclination on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to withdraw somewhat from the pledge. That affected him, personally, much less than some of his colleagues, as he was entirely opposed to this system of finance. It was intrinsically unsound. From the beginning he had felt that the development grant would be set up as a buffer between the Irish people and the

Treasury, and that the only result would be that Irish demands, hitherto met from the common Treasury, would be relegated to this purely Irish fund—a practice which might be described as feeding the dog with a bit of his own tail. That was exactly what had occurred, and it was likely to go on in an ever-increasing degree. The system was essentially a vicious one. A pocket of money withdrawn from the general financial system of the country always became the object of jobs and of log-rolling as to who should get the most of it. The experience of centuries showed it to be a bad and vicious system, and it had been applied to Ireland simply in the hope of stopping the mouths of the Irish people by the so-called development grant. The Government had been forced to recognise that they were treating Ireland meanly and ungenerously, and in their effort to devise some means by which they should appear to undo some of the injustice which the present financial system inflicted upon her they had set up this system. As time went on it would be found to be a bad system and a corrupt method of dealing with the finances of the country, and what had happened already? A year ago Ireland had an equivalent grant for education of £185,000, but instead of being applied to education as it ought to have been, it had been thrown into a common pool, and had been used for all kinds of objects, and only some £20,000 had been used for the purpose for which the fund was originally intended. Under the present system of governing Ireland every effort they made to remedy the unhappy condition of things in Ireland would only end in making it worse. As long as they adhered to the principle of the Union and denied to the people of Ireland a voice in the government of the country, it would be the duty of English Ministers, instead of quibbling about figures and endeavouring to prove that Ireland was justly treated, to take a broad and generous view of the real facts of the situation and propose a remedy.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 238; Noes, 155. (Division List No. 158.)

AYES

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hn. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hon Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Rt. Hn. Sir John C. R
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredrk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S. Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric

Hamilton,RtHnLordG.(Midd'x
Hamilton,Marq.of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy,Laurence (Kent,Ashford
Harris,F.Leverton(Tynemouth
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath,Sir James(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon.James HenryCecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon, Hon. Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Laurie, Lieut-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence,SirJoseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, JohnGrant(YorksN.R
Lee, ArthurH.(Hants.Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N.S.
Long,Col.CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell,RtHn.Sir H E.Wigt'n
Maxwell, W.J.H(Dumfriessh're
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott (Hants.)
Morgan,DavidJ.(Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, HC(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith,RtHnJ.Parker(Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.SirWilliam H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
Whiteley,H.(Ashton-und-Lyne)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork N.E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Evans,SirFrancisH.(Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R.C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander(Lanark,NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred

Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex.(Donegal, W.
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Crae, George
M‘Fadden, Edward
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Killop, W.(Sligo, North)
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, John Wynford
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tully, Jasper
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J.H.(Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10).

EDUCATION (LOCAL AUTHORITY DEFAULT) ACT, 1904 (MERIONETH).

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire) said he feared that the putting into operation of this Act in Merioneth would lead to considerable trouble in the near future. He had hoped that a middle way of peace might have been found. Given men free from prejudice, such a way was not impossible; but the Board of Education preferred the heavy bludgeon of the new Act. The original communication received by the education committee from the Board of education did not give the opinion of the law officers of the Crown with regard to the legal point raised by the deputation which waited on Lord Londonderry, and which had previously been raised by Lord Stanley of Alderley—viz., that the obligation of the local authority to maintain non-provided schools did not begin until the antecedent duty of managers to put their buildings in sufficient repair had been discharged. The contention of the Merionethshire Committee was that no liability rested upon them to discharge the claims made by managers of non-provided schools, owing to the failure of the management to make the repairs of the schoolhouses required by the committee. The Board of Education had advanced certain specific reasons for disregarding that contention. They were (1) That the committee applied for and received Parliamentary grants in respect to the non-provided schools, such grants being only payable with respect to schools which had complied with Section 7 of the Education Act of 1902. (2) That the county fund, throughout the period September 30th (the appointed day), 1903, and November 1st, 1904, had been applied to the maintenance of those schools. (3) That the secretary to the committee signed certain certificates to the effect that these schools had satisfied the conditions of Section 7 of the Education Act, 1902. (The committee submitted that in no instance had a certificate been signed, save a counter-signature, and that even if a counter-signature was, as the Board contended—but as the committee denied—equivalent to a certificate, that certificate did not state that the school satisfied the conditions of Section 7 of the Act of 1902, but Section 7 of the Act of 1870. The committee did not apply the county fund towards the maintenance of these schools, and it never had been so applied. The Board had been asked to state the ground on which they did not agree to the committee's contentions, but they had treated the committee with contempt and discourtesy. When the money was witheld from the three schools, the Board did not supply any information as to the items allowed or disallowed, but simply notified the sums they intended to pay. Surely before payment was made the committee should have had the opportunity of lodging objections. The Board asserted that the only action taken by the committee under Section 7 was before the Act came into operation, and was a report on the premises made simply for the information of the county council by the surveyors. But it was perfectly evident that the report was treated by the managers as sufficient notice. Indeed, the Board of Education received appeals against these requirements fully twelve months ago, and such appeals had been reported upon by the Board's officers. In face of these facts, he did not see how the Board could feel justified in supporting the technical objection made by the managers.

In the case of Llanellyn School, near Dolgelly, in which the Board had decided the action of the committee was not justified, the position of the schoolhouse was most unsuitable, the playground was inadequate and it was impossible to extend it. There was imminent danger to health caused by a polluted stream, the closets were disgraceful, their position bad, and the possibility of improving it *nil*; and it was impossible to light the premises satisfactorily. It was in these conditions that the education committee required the erection of a new school on a suitable site, and it was within their knowledge that the managers themselves, up to a very recent date, held identical views as to the impossibility of repairing the building, and they instructed an architect to prepare plans for a new school. The committee contended that they were legally entitled to refuse to maintain such a school, and they ought to be told under what statutory powers the Board had decided that the refusal was not justified. There was a specific case in point—the Holywell School in Flintshire. There the local authority demanded that a new school should be built upon an entirely new site, and the Board of Education with great reluctance upheld the demand. The consequence would be that the Church managers would have to find about £5,000, and he saw it stated that they were not prepared to do anything of the kind. There were scores of schools in Wales in the same position, and if the local authority demanded new schools the Board would have to uphold them.

He wished to know why the Board of Education had withheld £2,400 when only £400 was due to the Church schools. As a matter of mere courtesy some explanation was due from them. They had paid out the money without checking the vouchers, and they had refused to let the education committee do so. The Board ignored the contention of this section with regard to the certificates, and he could only presume that it was because they were alive to the fact that they had made a mistake and had acted in a high-handed manner. He referred to the communication received from the Board at the opening of these proceedings, which stated that the arrears were in respect of the period prior to November 1st, 1904, and that it was not contended by them that the schools did not comply with Section 7 in the first instance, and that it was not open to them, as a ground for not maintaining the schools, to make the contention that they did not comply with that section now. The Board, therefore, saw no reason why steps should not be taken to refund the managers the expense incurred in maintaining the schools. That was a very significant declaration, and he regarded it as the death warrant of scores of Church schools in every Welsh county. If the Glamorganshire Committee, for instance, exercised its powers under Section 7 of the Act, it could at its next meeting decline to recognise any of the Church schools in the county which had not complied with its demands. The local authorities in Wales had shown great consideration for the managers of Church schools in the difficulties in which they had been placed. Although notices had been given in a great many instances, they had been looked upon as a matter of form, and in many cases had been treated as a dead letter. Was it conceivable that this attitude of benevolent neutrality would continue towards the Church schools in other countries now that this attack had been made on Merioneth? It was only natural that peaceful forbearance should give way to active aggression.

There was a great deal more in this unhappy dispute than the triumph of Church or chapel, or the permanence of the Establishment. The rights of conscience were attacked when a man was made to pay for the teaching of dogma in which he did not believe; the liberty of the citizen was attacked when the refusal of a local authority to vote public money for sectarian purposes involved imprisonment; the Constitution was attacked when a Minister of the Crown deliberately forced upon an unwilling country an Act which the electors of that country had deliberately condemned. Burke had said that people were governed by a knowledge of their temper and a judicious management of it, and that in conflicts between the people and their rulers the presumption of right was at least equally in favour of the people. The people of Wales were to-day just as much in the right and the Government in the wrong as when Pym and Hampden made their protest against the payment of ship-money. Wales did not seek disorder. She was a law-abiding nationality, but when the will of a Bishop and the whim of a Premier presumed upon that characteristic, who would blame her if she defended those liberties to the utmost of her power. The setting of the Defaulting Authorities Act in operation against Merionethshire would produce an exhibition of national unity such as Wales had never shown before.

Sir ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorganshire, E.) said he rose to second the Motion of his hon. friend the Member for Merionethshire. So fully had his hon. friend gone into the question that it was not necessary for him to furnish further details, and he would confine himself to principles involved in the question. Beyond saying that his hon, friend's speech was worthy of the constituency represented by the late Mr. Thomas Ellis, his object was rather to show that his hon. friend had the support of all the Liberal Members of the Principality. The Government could not say that they were not warned as to what would be the result if they forced through the House such legislation as that contemplated by the Education Act of 1902. Nothing but disaster could follow. Indeed, it was not necessary for men with such brilliant parts and unique knowledge of their country to foretell what would be the result, any one with the most superficial knowledge of Wales and the Welsh people could come to no other conclusion from a measure that seemed to be specially framed for the purpose of driving the people into insurrection; and, as if to emphasise the gross blunder they had perpetrated, within some two years the Government found they had to bring in a Coercion Act to force the Welsh people to carry out that objectionable measure. Notwithstanding, he had hoped for better things even from the present Government.

The other evening in the debate on the vote of censure they were told that some ten counties in Ireland were proclaimed, and up to that time he understood the Crimes Act had not been put into force. More than that, they were told for some two years Ireland had enjoyed a tranquillity and prosperity not equalled in any like period since the Union, and they might ask Why? For the reason that the late Chief Secretary was wise enough to be guided by an Irish patriot. But, unfortunately for the Government, they had no Sir Antony MacDonnell in the Education Department, and he feared from what he had heard that afternoon that the benevolent influence he had wielded in the sister isle was withdrawn from that country. Should this be so, then all who were concerned for peace and good order in that country could not but deeply regret so deplorable a circumstance. But for the moment, taking it that such a calamity had not befallen Ireland, they had to say that even if this Act had been administered in the same spirit as Irish affairs during the last two years they would not have heard of the Welsh revolt and the Defaulting Authorities Act. It was difficult to realise that the administrators of a great Empire should be so ignorant of the habits, customs and creeds of a little country whose border was within some 130 miles from the seat of Government. Indeed, they could not have been more ignorant of the people of a province in India or China. To imagine that authorities like the county councils of Wales, each with a large Liberal majority—and that was equivalent to saying large majorities of Nonconformists—would put into force an Act that outraged their feelings and consciences! They thought it was bad enough to pay money into the Exchequer, part of which was devoted to teach creeds from which they dissented; but when they were asked to levy rates on themselves, and still more on their friends, in order to pay for the teaching of those creeds, it was more than any reasonable man would expect. He would venture to assert that there was no Gentleman on the opposite side of the House but would view with contempt any such action on the part of men holding and professing the principles of Welsh Nonconformity.

They had to complain that no public inquiry, with the exception of the abortive inquiry held at Carmarthen, had been made into this very vexed question. The Government used to very freely use a tribunal that they had not heard much of lately—a Royal Commission. Now, if there was ever a justification for holding such an inquiry, this was one of them. Statistics proved that the Welsh people paid more per inhabitant for education than any one of the other portions of the United Kingdom, and, of the thirteen counties of the Principality, Merionethshire had been one of the most generous. And yet this was the county of all others that the Education Department had first put in default. This was the way the Government showed their appreciation of the sacrifice the quarrymen of Festiniog and the peasantry of Merionethshire had made for higher, intermediate, and elementary education. He would wish to say, however strongly he resented the action of the Education Department, he hoped that the hon. Baronet would not understand that anything personal was intended to one whom they all respected. Indeed, he very much regretted that the hon. Baronet had to play the part of "Shylock" in this educational drama. But he wished to warn him and the Government, if they were determined to extract this "pound of flesh" from the Welsh people, they would have to be more dextrous than they had hitherto proved themselves to be if they did so without drawing one drop of blood.

He would conclude as he began, with saying that he had hoped the Government would have been able to carry on elementary education in Wales without having recourse to coercion. And he believed that would have been possible if the hon. Baronet had been advised by those who were competent to rightly understand the gravity of the situation in Wales. To put such legislation as the Defaulting Authorities Act into force in the Principality could not but be a most dangerous measure, and it must be obvious to all who knew Wales. But if the Government were determined to put into operation all the vindictive powers of the Defaulting Act, then, at least let them understand they did so after the most serious protest possible from the representatives of the Welsh people; and whatever might be the evil consequences of their action it would lie at the door of the present Administration.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Osmond Williams.*)

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said that no one regretted the religious dispute under the Education Act more than he did, though it showed among the various Parties and creeds a strong sense of the real importance of religion and the rights of conscience in our education system. What he wanted was if possible to bring about some means by which those who had strong feelings on this question — Nonconformist, Church of England, or any other denomination—should have the right and opportunity of bringing up their children in the national schools as far as possible in the denomination to which their parents adhered. It was from that point of view that he would deal with the arguments brought forward by the hon. Member who proposed the Motion. He wanted to say a word from the Church point of view. He did not believe there would be any difficulty in putting in force all the principles to which the hon. Member for Merioneth had particularly alluded.

The first question, the hon. Member had said, was right of conscience. Undoubtedly right of conscience ought not only to be guarded but safeguarded in every possible way in regard to the question of education. But how were they to do it? The great interference with the right of conscience—the right of parents to bring up their children in the denomination they selected—arose from the maintenance of the Cowper-Temple clause. There was no clause in the whole course of the Education Act which so much really interfered with the right of conscience as the clause which prohibited a child from being taught the religion of the denomination which the parents might desire in the elementary schools. Why not have a system of denominational education both in provided and non-provided schools, so that every child might be brought up in the religion which its parent desired? That was what he called giving due regard to the right of conscience. It had never been the Church Party that had objected to that. On the contrary, the Church Party in that House had stated constantly that their desire was not to exclude religious education, and that it was not to have the exclusive right of education in the non-provided schools. But religious education was such a source of friction that they could not always carry out what they desired. Let all schools, if they liked, go on a common basis, and let there be the right of entry to any denomination either to provided or non-provided schools. Wherever there were two or three children whose parents desired a particular form of denominational education there ought to be facilities under which that form of denominational education should be given.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): We actually offered what the hon. and learned Member suggests to Merionethshire, and it was refused by the clergy.

MR. CRIPPS said that Churchmen had often offered such a system if it were given a general application; but it had been defeated because the Nonconformists would not give up that most sectarian of all provisions, the Cowper-Temple clause. He himself believed that there ought to be this common right of entry. He did not believe the difficulty came from the Church of England at all. It was in the direction he had indicated, and that direction only, that the religious difficulty could be settled. He would appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite on this point. Every true lover of denominational education must wish the right of conscience to be extended as widely as possible. He wished to ensure in regard to Anglican children that they should have the opportunity of receiving Anglican education. The only way to get rid of the religious difficulty was not to exclude religious education, but to give it the widest possible basis, so that every denomination should have in regard to its own children equal and fair opportunity. The noble Lord the Member for Greenwich and other hon. Members had often expressed themselves in favour of a settlement of the religious difficulty on that basis.

The second point made by the hon. Member who moved the Resolution was as to the liberty of the subject. What did he mean by that? There might be many laws with which they were not in agreement, and if a man had a conscientious objection, if he preferred the penalty of the law to obedience to the law, he was not one of those who would find fault with that action. He thought there were many circumstances in which a man was bound to do it. If he had a serious conscientious objection he was bound to act according to the dictates of conscience, taking his chance of whatever penalties might follow. But the question here was a much wider proposition. He thought there should be no general liberty given to citizens to disobey the law. Exactly the same principle should apply to education as to any other subject. That was exactly what he said the other night about East Ham. Although an individual might have a conscientious objection a local authority was not justified in taking such action as many local authorities had taken in this matter. It would tend to greater illegality, and, therefore, to less liberty, because legality and liberty must always go hand in hand. The hon. Member for Merionethshire said that the Act was unconstitutional and made some harsh remarks about the Prime Minister and the Bishops.

Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS: I would be the last person to make any harsh remarks.

Mr. CRIPPS said he would withdraw the word "harsh." They would never be able to rely on a body which had to carry out Governmental duties if it was to be allowed to judge whether an Act was constitutional or not. As long as it was an Act it must be accepted for the purposes of administration, and as one which local authorities must and ought to obey. He did not understand the hon. Member to contend that the Act was unconstitutional in the wider sense because it had been enacted in a constitutional manner. If they were going to allow anyone to call in question an Act after it had been passed, and allow the right to disobey it, he did not believe there was a single Member of the House who would not find some Act of Parliament with which he thoroughly disagreed, and who, therefore, according to the doctrine put forward by the hon. Member, would find himself justified in acting in an illegal manner. The application of such a principle was worse in education than in other matters, because the children suffered. By all means let the local authority give notice to schools to effect necessary repairs; but it was grossly unfair not to give such schools time to comply with the notice. He was afraid that the real question here was not these minor matters, but the old dispute as regards religious matters, and he earnestly commended to the House the view that the only possible fair solution was not to seek to exclude religion in a spirit of mutual jealousy, but, on the contrary, by a spirit of mutual tolerance to spread denominational education and to give fair and equal opportunities as far as they could to every school, whether provided or not. In order to do this they must repeal the Cowper-Temple Clause, which at the present time stood in the way of any fair system of general denominational education.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said he had listened to the observations of his hon. and learned friend with great interest. It appeared to him that the first part of his speech was directed to a defence of the Education Act of 1902 and not to the Motion before the House. What was the question which his hon. friend the Member for Merionethshire had obtained leave to call attention to as a definite matter of urgent public importance? It was the fact, if they rightly interpreted certain correspondence, that the Board of Education, and the education committee for the county of Merioneth, had put into operation the Education (Local Authority Default Act), 1904. He believed that they had done so. In order to raise what he thought were the relevant questions for the consideration of the House that night he was going to lay down certain facts which he had gathered, and to inquire whether the acts he complained of were or were not legally done—whether in regard to these facts the Board of Education had acted legally. He understood that the Board of Education had deducted £364 from the Parliamentary grants due in the ordinary course for the purposes of elementary education in Merionethshire. The total grants amounted to £452. This sum became due on May 1st, and the Board of Education sent £88 to the treasurer of the County Council of Merioneth, announcing that they had applied the balance to five non-provided schools in the county. The question whether the Board had acted rightly in so doing must depend upon whether the local education authority was or was not in default. The local education authority, who acted under a scheme in accordance with Section 7 of the Act of 1902, declared that they were not in default, and that these five non-provided schools were not schools in respect to which the conditions of Section 7 of the Act had ever been fulfilled since the appointed day. His hon. and learned friend the Member for the Stretford Division had either not recently read, or had entirely forgotten, what the section said. Section 7 was probably the clearest and the least ambiguous section in the whole Act of 1902. What did it begin by saying in regard to the county council? It said—

> "The local education authority shall maintain and keep efficient all public elementary schools within their area which are necessary."

That was clear enough. Public elementary schools were defined in other Acts of Parliament, and everybody knew what a public elementary school meant. Then the section went on to say—

> "And have the control of all expenditure required for that purpose, other than expenditure for which, under this Act, provision is to be made by the managers, but in the case of a school not provided by them only so long as the following conditions and provisions are complied with."

Then there were a large number of conditions set out. His hon. and learned friend talked about notice of repair, but there was not a word about notice of repair in any of the conditions. He did not know where the hon. Member got these words unless it was from a diocesan conference. One of the conditions was stated in sub-section (d) and was in the following terms—

> "The managers of the school shall provide the schoolhouse free of any charge, except for the teacher's dwelling-house (if any), to the local education authority for use as a public elementary school, and shall, out of funds provided by them, keep the school in good repair, and make such alterations and improvements in the buildings as may be reasonably required by the local education authority, provided that such damage as the local authority consider to be due to fair wear and tear in the use of any room in the schoolhouse for the purpose of a public elementary school shall be made good by the local education authority."

No notice was required. It did not need any great legal knowledge in order to interpret that sub-section. If on the morning of the appointed day the schoolhouse was not in repair the local education authority had absolutely no duty towards a non-provided school at all, and if the school was in good repair on the appointed day, and it was allowed by the managers to fall out of repair afterwards, any obligation the local education authority had ceased automatically in accordance with the plain interpretation of this Act of Parliament. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman was endeavouring to confuse the mind of the House in regard to the two distinct conditions contained in Sub-section (d). Quite apart from the question of good repair, a local education authority might go and look at a schoolhouse and say, "We do not think this a fit and proper house for an elementary school, and we are going to demand that you shall make such alterations and improvements as we think reasonable." That was exactly what had been done if it were said that notice was required on the question of repairs. It so happened that the committee in this case was so careful that before the appointed day they had actually, at their own expense, taken the trouble to investigate the conditions of every non-provided schoolhouse in Merionethshire, and, in his opinion, so far from being in default in the matter they were a little over-zealous.

Mr. DUKE (Plymouth): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say whether in fact the local education authority required any board of managers to execute any repairs or alterations?

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES: Yes, they did, but he could not speak about every one of the twenty-four schools.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, they did in every one of the twenty-four.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES said he believed that some had become provided schools, and that there were now only twenty-one non-provided schools. But in regard to every one of those, before the appointed day surveyors and architects, appointed by the local education authority at their expense, went over the schools, and not only gave to each body of managers a specification, not of the required repairs, but of defects in the structure, but gave notice what they thought would be reasonable alterations and improvements. His hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Education, he thought, must have many letters of appeal from managers of non-provided schools in regard to this matter.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): Not so during that period.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES said that that led up exactly to his next point. He had the honour to place the construction of Section 7 of the Act of 1902 which he had just given before Lord Londonderry and the hon. Baronet the Secretary to the Board of Education at a meeting upstairs, and it was also put by the clerk to the county council in his reply to the first threatening letter which was written by the Board of Education. Their contention was that unless on the appointed day a non-provided school was in repair, and unless the managers of the non-provided school complied with the reasonable requirements of the county council committee on education in regard to alterations or improvements, no obligation attached to the county council. That was a perfectly clear contention, and although the hon. Member for Stretford advanced a different view that night, that contention was not contradicted by the Board of Education. The reply dated March 31st, 1905, was—

> "Sir,—Adverting to previous correspondence respecting the claims made upon your authority by the managers of voluntary schools in the county of Merioneth, I am to say that the Board of Education regret that no satisfactory explanation of the matters in question has been offered on behalf of the authority, as required in the Board's previous letter."

No contradiction of the previous proposition, definite, fairly urged, and leading up to the demand which he made on behalf of the committee for a fair and impartial arbitration——

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: What is the proposition?

MR. BRYNMOR JONES said that the proposition was that the Board of Education were misconstruing the Act of Parliament; that they did not understand what the meaning of the words "so long as" was. The letter, which was signed by Mr. Kingsford, then went on to lay down what he thought the hon. and learned Baronet would greatly regret to affirm either in that House or in a Court of justice. It reminded those to whom it was addressed that the expenses in question were in respect of the period to November 1st, 1904, and—

> "That the reason, and the only reason, given by your authority during that period for not adequately maintaining these schools was a resolution of your county council not to provide any funds from local rates towards the maintenance of voluntary schools. It was contended by your authority during that period"

the letter continued—

> "that these schools did not comply with Section 7, 1 D, of the Act of 1902, and that they could not, therefore, in their view legally be maintained. On the contrary, you applied for and received the Parliamentary grants in respect of these schools."

Now, he would ask the hon. and learned Baronet, who was a great lawyer and the author of a book on contracts and another on the law and custom of the Constitution, which were held in well-deserved reverence by the profession to which he belonged, whether he would maintain that the doctrine of waiver applied to a public rate-levying and rate-controlling authority? Would the hon. Baronet assert that there was any privity of contract between the county council created under the Act of 1888, the Board of Education, and the managers of non-provided schools? He understood that the hon. Baronet disclaimed that there was. He quite expected that so great an authority would not answer the question in a sense contrary to that which he was submitting to the House. What was the position? How could this public rating authority waive any condition laid down in an Act of Parliament? But if the county council of Merioneth did that—supposing the present county council resolved that the schoolhouses of non-provided schools were not in good repair, and applied the ratepayers' money to put them in good condition—would the hon. Baronet say that that would be a good and legal act? Then why should not the hon. Baronet allow the point to be submitted to a Court of justice? However, he would not persue this process of cross-examination with the hon. Baronet. Their contention was that they were not in default, and the correspondence that had taken place showed that the Board of Education had entirely misinterpreted the Act of Parliament so far as Section 7 was concerned.

Turning from the question whether there was or was not default, he would like to tell the Government that they were now face to face with the problems which hon. Members on that side of the House warned them about in 1902 and 1903. These county councils were corporations, and corporations had played a very great part in the history of this country. Indeed, nobody knew better than the hon. Baronet that that was true. There was once a Government that tried to destroy the City of London, and they sent all sorts of learned counsel to the Courts, and they ultimately got a writ of *quo warranto*, but in the very long report in the State trials the reporter added a note to this effect—

> "It does not appear that this writ was ever actually executed."

It never was executed in the City of London, and before three years had gone by the revolution of 1688 had taken place. [Ironical MINISTERIAL laughter.] All right; they wanted another revolution in Wales, and perhaps before three years were out the hon. Baronet would be very sorry he had ever entered into this disputation with the county of Merioneth. He begged to support the Motion.

*MR. DUKE said that if there was not so much talk about insurrection it would be much easier for the County Council of Merioneth and the managers of the non-provided schools to settle the matter between them. Instead of reading Section 7 of the Act of 1902, and trying to understand it and apply it, hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to be devoting their time to getting up a sort of spurious insurrection in Wales, and in the House they talked about the sacred rights of conscience and the liberties of the subject. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite threatened that there would be a revolution in Wales compared with which even the revolution of 1688 would be little more than a circumstance. Perhaps it could be avoided by a little consideration of the true position in Wales. The practical question was whether, unless the managers of a voluntary school did what the local authorities considered they ought to do, without any requisition as to repairs, all the grants could be stopped. Mere lawyers in matters of this kind looked at what would be the practical effect of the doctrine proposed. The contention would reduce the Act of 1902 to an absurdity. Repairs would not be done for want of money, and until they were done no money would be paid. Nobody dreamt when the Act was passed that there would be absolute harmony between the local authorities and the managers of voluntary schools, and therefore it was provided that, if any difference arose under Section 7, that difference should be decided by the Board of Education. That did not suit Gentlemen opposite. They wanted arbitrations or actions at law. Perhaps some of the ratepayers would be willing to spend their money in going to the Law Courts, but he was not sure that the minority, for whose protection the provision was required, would be willing to withdraw this matter from the plain mode of procedure that was laid down in the Act.

But the real matter in dispute was not the state of repair of certain schools; it lay much deeper. In June, 1903, there was a proposal before the County Council of Merioneth to make an education rate of 10d., but 1½d. was struck off because the council had decided not to support the non-provided schools. That was the beginning of the present agitation. In December, 1903, the county council met and adopted certain resolutions, and the first of them was this—

> "That this council adheres to its resolution passed at the meeting held in Dolgelly in June, 1903, not to levy a rate for the maintenance of non-provided schools within the county until"

—What? Until they were put in a state of repair? Nothing of the sort—

"until such schools are placed fully under popular control, and all religious tests imposed upon teachers are abolished."

Now, they could meet hon. Members on that question. It was fought out in the discussion of the Act of 1902. [HON. MEMBERS on the OPPOSITION Benches: "No, closured."] It would have to be fought out again. And this was to be kept as a bone of contention, and if necessary the education of the children was to be sacrificed in order to fight out a secular battle in which hon. Gentlemen had been engaged under a profession of interest in education. [HON. MEMBERS on the OPPOSITION Benches: "Oh."] It was not a question of painting and papering and whitewashing, but hon. Gentlemen were using the question of the repair of these schools in order to bring under review the policy of the Act of 1902, and if possible to secure its repeal. The interests of education were being sacrificed for Party considerations.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) said the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had spoken with a warmth of indignation not generally shown by him in debate in the House. It must be a matter of regret to those of them who represented Welsh constituencies that the few Tory Members from Wales had not availed themselves of the opportunity of discussing this question. He was sure that the pride of himself and his hon. friends in the fewness of their number would be much greater in the next Parliament. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who had spoken with ostentatious ignorance—he thought it was an exhibition of humour—would not enable them to get nearer a settlement by suggesting that Welsh Members were fighting something under a profession of interest in education when they were really animated by some other motive.

The operation of the Act of 1902, and the subsequent Act of 1904, proved, in the main, what the Welsh Members told the Government at the time, that they could not in the long run legislate successfully against the wishes of the people they were legislating for. Now, it must be remembered that the Default Act was a supplementary remedy. There was another remedy, that of *mandamus.* Why did not the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education put a *mandamus* in operation? The hon. Baronet was not only a legislator, but an administrator, and surely he could do something to settle some of these differences of opinion between the local education authority and the managers of non-provided schools. There were five schools where the difficulty had arisen, and as he understood it the sum of £364 had been deducted in respect of those five schools. The average attendance thereat was 17, 24, 78, 56, and 14, making a total average attendance in the five schools of 189 children. The hon. Baronet had deducted nearly £2 per child for the children in average attendance. The total grant earned by those schools in 1902 was £385, therefore he had deducted a sum very nearly equal to the total sum earned in Government grants by those five schools in 1902. He ventured to ask whether the hon. Baronet was prepared to say that any one of those five schools was in a fit and proper state of repair, and would he say that all five were in a fit and proper state of repair, because he could not look at the Report without coming to the conclusion that they were in a grave state of want of repair. Would the hon. Baronet also say that the whole sum spent in 1902 on those five schools exceeded £15? They had taken a strong standpoint on this question. The Act operated harshly on all parties. It was a harsh thing to levy rates in order to support those schools, which were Church schools in management and in doctrine; these were Church schools so far as the managers were concerned, and yet were schools provided for the education of Nonconformist children, partly supported by rates paid by Nonconformist parents.

He asked the House to say that the Welsh people had taken a proper attitude —and what the Prime Minister would call a conscientious attitude—upon this question. By his speech of 15th July, 1904, the Prime Minister showed that he had formed a conscientious opinion on this question. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had formed a conscientious conviction upon it, but, in any event, why were they not also to be allowed conscientious opinions in the matter? He asked the Parliamentary Secretary to say that the local authority not only had no duty, but it had no right to maintain these school out of the rates. It was a waste of public money to support them. He would also ask him to say whether in each of these five schools it was not the fact that they were out of repair and required a great deal of alteration to make them fit for the children. The authorities were doing their best for the children by insisting that fit and proper schools should be provided for them. He submitted that they were under no obligation to maintain these schools until they had been put into a fit and proper state of repair, and that there had been no default on their part within the meaning of the Act.

LIEUT.-COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the matter at issue was a very small one. The minority in Wales had done its best to urge the majority in the county council to administer the Act fairly and justly, but they claimed that the majority had not administered it as they should have done. The question was whether the House of Commons was to be omnipotent or whether the county council majorities were to take its place. Only the other day a deputation waited on the Minister of Education, and the gist of the whole proceedings was to be found in the question asked by Lord Londonderry as to whether if the schools were put in a fit and proper state of repair the authorities would maintain them. He was sorry to say that his hon. friends opposite refused to give a definite answer to that question. The minority were perfectly prepared not to ask for rate-aid if their schools were not in reasonable repair. They were perfectly prepared to abide by the consequences of the Act, but he for one would never have sat silent while the Bill of 1902 passed through the House if he had had any idea that his hon. friends opposite would have taken the extreme course they had adopted in this matter. They knew they were in the minority and that they were in the hands of the majority, but they never dreamed that the majority would have tyrannised over them as they had done. He appealed to the House of Commons to support the Churchmen and Nonconformists, the Conservatives and Liberals, of Wales who desired that the Act should be fairly, squarely, and justly administered in the Principality. He asked the House to uphold its omnipotence, its power, and its influence, and not to allow the county councils of Wales to set so bad an example to future legislation and future reforms.

Mr. Ellis Griffith.

Throughout the debate on the Bill in 1902 hon. Members opposite fought hard for what they wanted, viz., control, and the Prime Minister and those who comprised the Government at that time stated that they were given control by the Bill. Hon. Members then would not allow that they had that power, but he appealed to the common sense and equity of the House, and asked whether sufficient control had not been given. The authorities could afford if they liked to administer the Act justly, and they could get almost everything they wanted because their control was so great. They had the power of putting in any number of pin-pricks, and all they had to do was to wait and to be tolerant in the matter. He, personally, was not in favour of any reform of the Education Act until a fair trial had been given to it. He asked hon. Members opposite whether in the event of their Party coming into power they would be in a better position than they enjoyed under the present Government. He asserted that their position would be more difficult because their Government would have the support of the Irish Members, whilst the Churchmen on their own side would be against them. He thanked the House for a fair hearing, and hoped for the sake of the House of Commons, and for the sake of justice, hon. Members would do all in their power to induce in a friendly way the Welsh county councils to administer the Act.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he certainly had no reason to complain of the tone in which the mover and seconder of the adjournment had introduced this subject. If he failed to reply to all the legal questions which were addressed to him by the hon. and learned Member for the Swansea Disrict it was because he deemed it inadvisable to try and answer off-hand legal conundrums carefully prepared, of a somewhat recondite and academic character, and not specially bearing on the subject before them. He assured those who had spoken on the other side of the House that it was with no light heart, and not without a very grave sense of responsibility, that the Board of Education came to the conclusion that they must—in response to the demands of managers for the repayment to them of moneys which they had expended, and which ought to have been provided for them by the local education authority —repay to the managers the moneys so expended, and must make the corresponding deduction from the payment which would otherwise have been made to the local education authority. He had hoped that matters were settling down in Wales and that the Education Act was being administered throughout the Principality. Even in Merioneth itself they had had every reason to hope that the Act was being administered, and it had been since the late autumn of last year. The particular period to which the transactions under consideration referred was the period from the end of September, 1903, when the appointed day for Merioneth came, until the end of October, 1904. During that period arrears accumulated which should have been met by the local education authority, and for payment of which managers made constant and urgent appeals to the Board of Education.

A good deal had been said on the subject of repair, and he was asked whether they had had appeals from managers on that subject during the period in question. The correspondence which passed between the Board of Education and the local education authority during that period consisted simply of a reference to the local authority of the demands of managers for the maintenance due to them, and in response enclosures from the local education authority of resolutions which they had passed to the effect that they would raise no rate in order to assist in the maintenance of voluntary schools. During that time the Parliamentary grants were applied for and obtained by the local education authority in respect of those schools, but nothing else than the amount of those grants—which when paid to the local authority passed at once into the general county funds—no other payments were made to the managers of voluntary schools in Merionethshire. Something had been said regarding the surveyors' reports. It was perfectly true that before the appointed day the County Council of Merioneth went to the expense of having all the schools, voluntary and council, surveyed throughout the area, and the report made by the surveyor to the local education authority was, in the case of these schools, forwarded to the managers of the schools, but no comment was made, no suggestion that any of the requirements should be put into effect, whether they were for alterations and improvements, or whether they were for repairs. There had been nothing throughout the whole period with which he was dealing to suggest that the subject of repairs was present to the mind of the local education authority as a reason for not maintaining the schools. It was not until December of last year that the local education authority, writing to the Board to say that they were now maintaining the schools, announced that they should hold themselves entitled to discontinue the maintenance if reasonable requirements for alterations and improvements were not carried into effect.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES: Was it the local education authority that wrote the letter?

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON said it was either the authority or their recognised agent. Nothing was then said about repairs. What they had before them during that time was the announcement by the local authority that it would raise no rate for the maintenance of voluntary schools. There was consequently a grave doubt in the minds of managers as to whether they would be maintained by the local authority. There was no request made through them either for repairs, or for alterations and improvements, as any condition of maintenance; and at the same time there was a demand, or rather a request, signed by the representative of the local education authority, to the Board of Education for the Parliamentary grants, which were only due if the schools complied with the requirements of the Education Act under Section 7, 1B, by which managers were required to keep schools in good repair. The local authorities, therefore, admitted that these schools were in good repair. Without labouring a point of law as to whether the question of repairs was waived by the local authority, it seems a matter of honesty and common sense that if anyone obtains money by certifying to the existence of certain facts he could not turn round afterwards and deny those facts. But as to the fact of repairs he was prepared to state, in contradiction, he was afraid, to what had been alleged by hon. Members on the other side of the House, that with two exceptions—one certainly and one doubtful—the voluntary schools throughout Merionethshire were in a fit state for the reception of children for the purposes of elementary education without risk to their health, comfort, or convenience. The exceptions were Festiniog, which was condemned, and the school near Llanelltyd, which was under consideration, for there was a question of whether the managers could carry out on the site of the school the repairs and alterations which would be necessary to turn it into a suitable school, or whether it would be better to abandon the school and have a new one erected on a new site.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: On whose authority did they come to that conclusion?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: We inquired into the matter ourselves.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Was any notice given to the local authority that an inquiry was being instituted? This is the first we have heard if it.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said the county council surveyor went round and surveyed the schools and reported on them, and when this question arose the Board of Education thought it desirable that they should satisfy themselves as to the condition of the schools, and they had done so. With regard to the Holywell School in Flintshire, which had been referred to, all he could say was that the Board of Education had been waiting for, he thought, months to get an answer from the local education authority to inquiries addressed to them as to what they thought desirable in respect of the school. He was bound to say that, as regarded the bulk of the council schools and of the voluntary schools in Merioneth, they were alike fit for the purposes of public elementary schools, although they were both susceptible of improvement. He had read the reports of the county surveyors, and they did not bear out the description given by the hon. Member for Anglesey. He had also statements of what had been done by managers of the schools during the past few months, and the schools were being put into a condition which would satisfy the requirements of the local education authority, and he was not aware that in every case the recommendations of the surveyor of the county council had been carried out in respect of the council schools. He was quite ready to admit, however, that Merioneth had done more than some Welsh local authorities in the way of putting its council schools into a decent and proper condition. The question of what was meant by good repair must surely be a matter of circumstance and of the particular requirements which the building was intended to meet. They must ask the plain question. Could the children remain for the necessary number of hours in the school in reasonable comfort and in conditions which were not detrimental to health? He was satisfied that in all the schools except the two to which he had referred the children could be taught without risk to their health, comfort, or convenience.

Then what were the rights of the local authority? The local education authority was clearly not entitled to say that because a window was broken or one or two tiles were off the roof, or the walls needed a coat of paint or a door was off its hinges the school must go off the list for Parliamentary grants. These things could be remedied in twenty-four hours or a few days, and reasonable notice must be given and time allowed. Was it possible to have two standards of good repair—one for voluntary schools and one for council schools? He was afraid that some of the local authorities in Wales would be put to very considerable expense in the provision of new schools if the Board of Education were to treat their schools as they proposed to treat the voluntary schools. Were there two standards? He believed that in Merioneth itself some of the recommendations of the surveyor had not been carried out in the council schools. He turned to the neighbouring county of Denbigh, where the council surveyed the voluntary schools before the appointed day. It had not yet appointed anyone to survey the council schools. Last year the Board had a long discussion with the local authority and the managers of a public elementary voluntary school at Pontypridd. The Board of Education determined that some alterations must be carried out as required by the local authority, but recognised the great difficulty of doing so on the existing site of the school. He went to see the school himself, and came to the conclusion that, owing to its position, its structure, lighting, and ventilation, it was quite impossible to make a decent school of it, and that it must be abandoned. It was transferred to the council, and the first thing the local authority did was to write to the Board of Education and request that the school should be allowed to remain *in statu* for two years.

In the county of Carnarvon there were at least twenty-five schools concerning which the Board of Education had been in communication from time to time with the local authority; and there were several schools which were seriously at fault in respect of repair and sanitary condition, and the Board of Education had the greatest difficulty in obtaining any attention from the local education authority concerned in respect of these schools. He would give an account of one case. The inspector having reported offices to be offensive, the playground unfit for drilling exercises, unsatisfactory ventilation in girls' cloak-room and lighting of infants' room, signs of damp on school walls, and minor defects, the Board inquired on January 27th, 1905, of the county council what steps they were taking, but had received no reply. In a second case strictures on the premises had been passed in inspector's reports for the last few years. In 1902 he reported that another class-room was needed, and that the present partition was unsatisfactory for purposes of lighting and supervision and needed alteration, that rooms were insufficiently lighted, walls damp, and the cloak-room not ventilated. These remarks were repeated in October, 1904, and on January 25th, 1905, the Board requested information as to council's proposals. After six weeks delay they were informed that the council's architect had been instructed to prepare plans of the alterations necessary. In another case the inspector reported that the playground was in an unsatisfactory state, mud and water had collected at the entrance to the offices, and that a drain was not in good order. The Board requested that immediate steps should be taken, and after a delay of three weeks the local education authority replied that, owing to extreme pressure of work in their architect's department, they could not attend to this matter. In regard to another case under the control of the Carnarvon County Council, in his report for the year 1903 the county council were informed by the inspector that the ventilating and warming were unsatisfactory, while the floor was worn and the drains required attention. He referred to the report of the county surveyor for further defects in the premises and equipment. On November 24th, 1904, His Majesty's inspector reported that no steps had been taken to remedy the defects in the premises. On February 8th, 1905, the Board asked to be informed of the proposals of the county council for remedying these defects, and were told a month later that the decision of that body had been deferred to their next meeting. On March 10th the Board sent the county council a special report on the premises. No answer had been received. He would not follow the history of Carnarvonshire further, but he might remind the hon. Member for Carnarvon the next time he indulged in rhetorical expressions about pure dogma and foul drains, that he must recollect that the absence of dogma was not inconsistent with very unsatisfactory sanitary conditions.

Was this outcry about repairs genuine. When Lord Londonderry asked the deputation from Merionethshire whether if the premises had been in good repair the school would have been maintained, no answer was given.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES said the question was put to his client behind his back. He said one county council could not bind other county councils any more than this Parliament was going to bind the next.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON said the question was addressed to a deputation representing the Merioneth County Council, and no answer was received. It was true that the deputation had the assistance of the hon. and learned Member, but that did not close their mouths altogether. He asked hon. Members opposite whether this was not a somewhat unworthy pretext for declining to carry out their legal obligations to maintain the voluntary schools. He did not desire to minimise the religious difficulty. He knew the Nonconformists considered they had grievances under the Education Act. But he asked them to remember that they were as nothing compared with the grievances suffered by many members of the English Church and all Roman Catholics before the Act of 1902. Did they seriously think that the cause of religion, or the cause of education, or even the cause of political Party, was served by making these innocent and unfortunate children the victims of their endeavour to starve out or to distress the voluntary schools?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Baronet, in replying to an interpellation about county Merioneth, had entered into a long disquisition as to the state of the schools in the county of Carnarvon. Some hon. Members seemed to think that was relevant, and if it was relevant he was prepared with an answer, for he happened to know something of the county of Carnarvon, and he would tell the House exactly what the facts were. An impartial report was made by the surveyor on the state of the provided and non-provided schools, and for each class of schools £12,000 was required for repairs. The county council instantly put in hand the repairs for their schools, and at the last meeting which he attended they resolved to borrow £17,000 for the purpose, £5,000 more than the surveyor's estimate. Of course the money could not be laid out at once, but it had been raised. That was how the county council of Carnarvonshire carried out its legal obligations with regard to repairs. But what had the non-provided schools done? The managers of the non-provided schools had only spent £2,000, and the county council up to the present had not served them with notice and only discontinued one school, showing considerable indulgence to managers who had only carried out a sixth of the required repairs, and this indulgence had been requited by a sneer, without any information as to the facts. The other day an attack was made upon the action of the Carnarvonshire County Council by a rather foolish person at a Church bazaar, and instantly the Church members of the education committee got up and protested, saying that the county council had treated the Church schools exceedingly well. But after the way in which the hon. Baronet had spoken of their conduct they would know how much gratitude to expect for any indulgence they might show to the non-provided schools. However, that matter was absolutely irrelevant, as the question raised had reference to Merioneth.

The Board of Education had put into operation the Coercion Act to compel Merioneth to obey the law. How had the Board themselves obeyed the law? Eighteen months or two years ago notices were served on all the managers of non-provided schools in Merioneth that their school buildings were out of repair, and with the notices were particulars of the repairs and alterations demanded by the local education authority. The authority was not entitled to maintain the schools if they were out of repair, but the hon. Baronet had evaded that question. It was a condition precedent in his own Act of Parliament. It was all very well to say it was a question of consideration and common-sense when it was a question of compelling managers to obey the law, but when it was a matter affecting Nonconformists it was the law that had to be enforced. The default had not arisen in respect of what had happened in the last few months but in respect of the time when then took not the slightest steps to put their schools in repair. The hon. Baronet admitted that since November salaries had been paid. It was prior to November the default arose, and that was the time when no repairs were executed. The hon. Baronet said he was satisfied the schools were not out of repair, but how had he satisfied himself? How did the Board of Education carry out its own Act? It was a Court of Appeal, and should act as an impartial tribunal between the education authority and the managers, but how had it done this? In the absence of the local education authority, and without notice to surveyor or medical officer, the Board sent down Mr. Kingsford, a clerk in the Department, who sat in judgment on the reports of surveyor, architect, and medical officer, told the managers to take no notice of the requisitions of the education authority, and just indicated to them the sort of thing he considered satisfactory. He asked the Prime Minister whether that was his opinion of the way in which the Act should be administered. Did he think it satisfactory that a clerk should go down to give an opinion on an architectural question, or on the sanitary condition of a building, and reverse the decision of experts?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said that Mr. Kingsford merely accompanied the inspector for convenience of more direct communication with the Board at Whitehall.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE asked how that improved matters. If there was a dispute between the local authority and the Board of Education on questions of structure and sanitation, was an inspector—not a sanitary inspector, but an inspector of schools—to decide? If that was the opinion of the Government, he was not surprised that local authorities were beginning to defy them. It simply showed that they were making no attempt at all to administer the Act fairly as between parties. The plain truth was that the Board of Education themselves had taken no trouble to compel these managers to administer the Act. The Board had insisted upon a report on the provided schools, but they had never made any investigation with regard to the voluntary schools of Carnarvon. They were simply spies on the provided schools. He was not going to say, and never had said, that this was purely a question of repairs. The only point he put with regard to repairs was that, if the Board of Education were going to insist on local authorities administering the law, they must respect the law themselves. The Board of Education had received many reports in the past from their own inspectors as to the insanitary condition of voluntary schools in Carnarvonshire. They had taken no notice of them, but went on paying the grants. On the authority of the late Secretary to the Board of Education, they had it that many reports adverse to the schools were sent back to be re-written, and that had never been denied. And now the Board of Education lectured the local authorities in Wales and elsewhere on the duty of administering the law. He was waiting to see what they were going to do with regard to the schools in London.

After all, a much deeper question was involved. When the Act was being carried through the House the Prime Minister was warned of the difficulties he would have in getting the Act administered. He sapped the moral authority of the law by the conditions under which he carried it. No one had done more than he to bring the law and its administration into contempt in the last few years. He knew at the time that this Act was not demanded by the people. He had no mandate for carrying it. The people were repudiating it. On the authority of the Member for West Birmingham it was the most unpopular Act which this Government had passed, and that was saying a great deal. Was the Prime Minister in these circumstances not injuring the moral authority of the law by enforcing an Act of this kind in every particular when he knew perfectly well that, in the course of another year or two, the decision of this House of

Commons would be reversed upon the point? [" Oh."] Could any hon. Member deny that? Only last week the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said it was a most unpopular Act, and attributed most of the defeats of the Government at by-elections to the feeling against it. He sincerely regretted the Prime Minister should not have shown a little more restraint with regard to that Act.

No one had been anxious to precipitate this strife in Wales. The responsible leaders of the Church Party did their best to persuade the Board of Education not to press it, and the Board of Education had done so simply at the request of the more irresponsible section of their supporters in Wales. The hon. Member for the Montgomery Boroughs was the only Welsh Tory Member who had had the courage to speak in support of this Act, but even he did not appeal to the Government to put it into operation. Why had they done it? They knew perfectly well what would happen. If the Act were put into operation the local authority would be called upon to collect the deficiency. How were the local authority to collect the deficiency? Did the Government imagine that a Nonconformist county council like Merioneth were going to put their own friends in gaol on a matter in which they themselves felt strongly, and in regard to which they deeply sympathised with the conscientious convictions of their constituents? It was a thing which no Government ought to impose upon a local authority. If they did it there was but one course open to the local authorities. There would be no defiance of the law. The local authorities would simply say, "You must administer the Act yourself and collect the rates yourself." Would the Government do it? Certainly no county council in Wales would ever undertake so serious a responsibility. That was not a defiance of the law. It was simply a recognition that the Government was asking something at their hands which no Government had a right to ask of any municipality. No law in this country had any authority apart from the sanction of the people. [" Oh."] Did hon. Members really think that they could carry Acts of Parliament in defiance of the people? [" Yes."] All he could say was that it was contrary to the spirit of the Constitution, and opposed to the liberties of the people, and he regretted that the Prime Minister should not have exercised his influence to restrain the Board of Education in this matter. It would have been only a matter of twelve months at the outside, but he had declined to do so.

The Prime Minister knew that he had no right to pass that Act after the declaration at the last election that Nonconformists could vote for the Government because nothing touching any controversial question, apart from South Africa, would be dealt with by them. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who alone got the Government elected, gave that pledge, and the people accepted it as a pledge given on behalf of the Government. The Prime Minister himself at Manchester and elsewhere declared that the South African War was the sole question before the electorate. Supposing the Leaders of the Opposition had gone to the country declaring that the misconduct of the war was the only question at issue, promising that no controversial questions should be dealt with, and then, having secured a majority, abolished the denominational schools, what would have been said by hon. Gentlemen opposite? He apologised to his right hon. friends for suggesting, even for the sake of argument, that they could be guilty of anything so thoroughly dishonourable. But the Government, having secured office by such tactics, had taken advantage of it to pass an Act of this kind, and were now trying to enforce it by coercion. He regretted that they should do it.

They were bringing all this trouble upon a county which had made more sacrifices for education than any other county in the Kingdom. Although it was one of the poorest counties in the Kingdom, it had spent more money per head of the population for education than any other. Its provision for secondary schools was higher than that of Prussia, and treble that of any other English county. Most of this had been done by voluntary contributions and by their rating themselves, and to taunt the people of Merioneth with disregarding the interests of the education of the children was unworthy, and certainly such a taunt ought not to come from anybody who knew nothing about the circumstances. This county had made the most exemplary sacrifices for education, and it was the most law-abiding county in the whole of this kingdom. ["Oh, oh!"] There was no county in the country where the Judges had less to do when they came down there than the county of Merioneth. The present head of the Board of Education had begun to dictate to a county like Merioneth what it should do in respect of the education of its children. He ventured to say that the Government had done nothing more foolish, nothing more illegal, than the action it was now taking. [Cries of "Divide, divide!"] He submitted to hon. Members opposite that they were entitled to a full investigation of this case. The Government were putting into operation an Act which was not even debated in this House, and as they were not allowed to debate the Act, surely they were entitled to debate its administration. Even the hon. Baronet opposite had refused to answer some simple Questions which had been put to him, and he had been obliged to admit that these schools were out of repair during the whole time that the county was in default; and yet he was putting into operation this Act when he knew perfectly well that if there was any illegality it was in giving grants to those schools at all. It was useless appealing to the Government.

The hon. and learned Member for Stretford had asked for the suggestion of a compromise and of terms. The Welsh Members offered the identical terms which the hon. and learned Member had suggested that evening. The laity of the Church and the Bishop of the diocese were prepared to accept them, and only the clergy refused. Yet the Government were creating strife in a county without the slightest investigation of the circumstances. They asked for an inquiry, and what did they get? The Government sent down a clerk from the Board of Education to find out what was the minimum of repair that could be done. Had the Government ever inquired into the circumstances? Did they know the conditions? In one school, out of the entire total of children in attendance, only six were Church children, and in another school only three were Church children. In a third school there were only two Church children, and in a fourth there was not a single Church child at all. And yet there could not be any Nonconformists on the foundation management, they were disqualified like lunatics, bankrupts, and criminals. It was monstrous that an Act of this kind should be put into operation, and he was glad that his hon. friend had called the attention of the House to this question.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 113; Noes, 211. (Division List No. 159.)

AYES.

Allen, Charles P.
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Crooks, William
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice,CaptEC.(S.Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Findlay,Alexander(Lanark,NE
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harwood, George
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry

Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moulton, John Fletcher
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, John Wynford
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (N.Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Osmond Williams and Mr. Herbert Roberts.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manchr.
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middle'x
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshr.
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Rt. Hn. Sir John C. R.
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Rt Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S Edm'nds
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robt. T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. Kent (Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks NR
Lee, Arthur H (Hants. Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshr.
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntington)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert

Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Sir Harry S(Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, RtHnJ. Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edw. James (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheffi'd
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Welby, Lt.-Col. ACE. (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Younger, William

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NAVAL LANDS (VOLUNTEERS) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) said this Bill had been introduced without any discussion whatever. It was a very short Bill, but it seemed to him to have far-reaching consequences. The Military Lands Act of 1892, which it was now sought to apply to Naval Volunteers, was an Act which enabled money to be borrowed for military lands to be used for Volunteer sheds, ranges, halls, etc. Those lands might be acquired by the Secretary of State on his own account for military purposes. He thought the Bill now before them would place a heavy burden upon the localities concerned. Assuming that a locality was loyal enough to raise a considerable number of Volunteers, then instead of meeting the expense out of the Imperial purse as they ought to do, they were now proposing to place the cost upon the locality. It should be borne in mind that they were now proposing to make the Volunteer force practically part of the Regular Army. It seemed to him very strange that they should now be introducing legislation which would impose a burden upon certain localities which happened to be so loyal as to undertake the raising of Volunteers. He agreed that at one time there was something to be said for asking county councils and borough councils to do something in this direction, because then the force was essentially a Volunteer force, and it was not so much mixed up with the organisation of the Army as it was at the present time. If land was taken for naval purposes, for the construction of a battery, this Bill would enable money to be borrowed on the security of the grants which Parliament gave to the Volunteers, whether naval or military.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington) said that the first order for Tuesday would be the adjourned debate on the Post Office (Telephone Agreement). [Opposition cries of "Oh."] He had informed the hon. Member who had an Amendment down as well as the hon. Member for Leeds. He did not think the discussion would take long, and it would be followed by the Second Reading of the Finance Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) expressed surprise at the change in the order of business proposed. Everybody expected the Finance Bill would be the first order. What was the urgency for the appointment of this Committee? What was the reason which had induced the right hon. Gentleman to put forward the appointment of this Committee to-morrow? Such a Committee could not alter the agreement and it had simply got to say that it agreed with it. He thought that to appoint the Committee at all was a waste of the time of the House. What was the real urgency of this course? Was it because the Government were having a general sweep up in view of a general election? If the right hon. Gentleman would say that was the reason he should be very glad to assist him, but unless he gave them some satisfactory reason he thought he would find that it would take considerably more time than he was anticipating.

MR. CHURCHILL (Oldham) said it was rather inconvenient that such short notice should be given of the fixing of a day for the discussion of a subject in which such an extraordinary amount of interest was taken by the great commercial bodies outside the House. He should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman would have given them two or three days notice at least. Surely the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues had been drawn to the resolution passed by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce on this subject, and the very strong opinion entertained in Manchester and Liverpool as to the composition of this Committee.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said it would have facilitated matters if the right hon. Gentleman had given adequate notice of his intention to take this question of the appointment of this Committee. By the course suggested there would actually be no opportunity given to them of either amending or rejecting the agreement. He would suggest that it should be postponed until Monday. If this course was persisted in it might lead to a prolonged debate, and the discussion on the Finance Bill would be curtailed in consequence.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) joined in the appeal that the right hon. Gentleman should allow a clear day for the general discussion of the Second Reading of the Finance Bill. Owing to the discussion of the Motion for adjournment that evening, the Finance Bill had not been reached. He hoped the general discussion on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill would not be curtailed, as would undoubtedly be the case if the Telephone Agreement was put down as the first order to-morrow.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) reminded the right hon. Gentleman that notice had already been given that it was the intention of the Government to take the Finance Bill to-morrow and then the Rating Bill. Now, when the House was practically empty, it was proposed without any notice to take the Telephone Agreement. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would facilitate the business of the House if he adhered to the arrangement originally made, upon the authority of which a large number of Members had gone home expecting to find that the first business to-morrow would be the Finance Bill. He did not think the course suggested was treating them quite fairly.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD suggested that a Question should be put to the Leader of the House next day, and that an agreement might then be come to.

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at thirteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 16th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for the Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill. And that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill ought to be dispensed with. Read, and agreed to.

Earl of Stamford's Cheshire Estate Bill [H.L.]. Judges' Report received; Bill presented, and read 1ª.

Great Eastern Railway Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments.

Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Wrexham Gas Bill; Weaver Navigation Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill; Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 3rd of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Commercial Union Assurance Bill [H.L.]; Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Truro Water Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order).

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]; Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.]; Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª on Friday next.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petitions for early closing of: of Vestry meeting of St. Marks, Barrow-in-Furness; Gosport Congregational Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour; Balham and Upper Tooting Branch of the Women's Total Abstinence Union. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

Petitions in favour of; of the National Temperance Federation; Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars; Anglo-Indian Temperance Association; Executive Committee of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Temperance Association; Vestry meeting of St. Mark's, Barrow-in-Furness. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

JOURNAL COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the One hundred and thirty-sixth Volume of the Journals (4th Edward VII., 1904), with an Index, was ready for delivery; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and the said Volume ordered to be delivered in the same manner as the preceding Volumes of the Journals have been delivered.

CEYLON.

Papers relating to the education of immigrant Tamil coolie children employed on estates. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection, That they have added the Lord Newton to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House, and by the Standing Committee, to be received on Monday next, and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 74.)

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR.)

*Lord COLERIDGE rose to call attention to the importation of Chinese indentured labourers into the Transvaal, and to the conditions under which they are being imported into and are living in the Transvaal, and to the declarations of His Majesty's Ministers on the subject, and to move for Papers. He said: My Lords, I move the Resolution which stands in my name for the purpose of eliciting from the noble Duke who represents the Colonial Service in this House further information on various points than the official documents disclose. I am quite sure that, trusting as I do to the courtesy of the noble Duke, which I can assure him is appreciated by us, he will not refuse me the information I desire. I think the time has now come for reviewing the situation. The last time this subject was debated in this House the policy which the noble Duke represents had been talked of but had not been carried into effect. We have now had very nearly a year's working of an experiment which is undoubtedly a novel experiment, and, as some of us think, a disastrous experiment. We in this country are solely responsible for that experiment. The Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies are Crown colonies, and it is while they are Crown colonies that this novel departure from ancient policy has been put in force. The people inhabiting those colonies have never been consulted, and therefore it is true to say that we are solely responsible for the experiment, and that upon our shoulders must rest either the blame or the credit that attaches to the policy.

It was undoubtedly the very irony of fate that discovered the richest goldfield in the world within the borders of what was a pastural Republic. Men flocked from all parts of the globe intent upon wealth, and upon wealth only, and in so far as they added to the taxable resources of the country they were welcome, but in so far as they threatened to upset the existing political state of affairs, or to set up in that country anything in the nature of an *Imperium in imperio*, they were greeted with jealousy, with alarm, and subsequently with hostility, and we know how out of this state of things the war grew up. We are perhaps too near the time to finally decide as to the blame or credit, as to who was right or who was wrong in that most regrettable controversy. We know also how the annexation of the new country naturally and almost irresistibly grew out of its conquest, and we know also what loss of life and treasure we sustained in the course of that war, and the annexation which was the result of it.

We were told, and we hoped, that when the war was over the scars which were open would rapidly heal. The country is now ours. Two new colonies have been added to the Empire, and we have had to start these colonies upon their new career. A great chance lay before us. We send forth each year from this country tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of emigrants to other lands, and emigrants who are of the most enterprising character. America absorbs a great quantity, and I confess I rather grudge them to America. Canada absorbs a number; Australia is already jealous of the influx of immigrants, and bids fair to stop the flow altogether; and the greater portion of the British Empire apart from these countries consists of lands under tropical suns, where Englishmen cannot make a permanent home, and where, after all, they must be more or less transitory settlers. But South Africa remains, consisting of vast territories, full of the combined possibilities of agricultural as well as of mineral wealth, and a country where emigrants from these shores might settle and find a home under the British flag. Golden visions were dangled before the electors when their votes were desired as to the prospects which lay before us in the future. My Lords, have those prospects been realised? Is there the slightest hope of their realisation?

In our view a prosperous colony in a temperate climate means something that will be not only an addition to, but really a strength and a buttress to the Empire. It means a place where emigrants can find a home which they can permanently inhabit, and where they can build up on the old lines of British self-government a daughter colony, looking with regard and affection to the mother country. That is our idea of a colony in a temperate zone. Is that the kind of colony that we are building up in South Africa? The colony we are building up in South Africa is a colony founded in the twentieth century, yet founded upon the old Roman pattern. The wealth we see in the hands of a few. We remember Lord Milner's celebrated saying—

"We do not want a white proletariat."

The close ring is becoming ever closer day by day and month by month, and ever grasping within its clutches more and more of the natural industries of that country. The Government is now in the hands of a huge trust, which is obtaining vast wealth by servile labour, and the members of which care nothing for the country from which this wealth is derived except as a means of deriving wealth. Labour is done increasingly, not by British citizens but by aliens—aliens imported under contracts which would be illegal if entered into in this country, and aliens to whom is denied every civic right. The wealth extracted is sent out of the country never to return, and is derived not from the ever-productive powers of nature, which are always being renewed, but from a draining and impoverishing of the capital wealth of the country. The speed with which that gold can be extracted is the sole object of the mineowners.

The Chinaman is now the cheap extracting power, the kind of human pump which is to suck out from the bowels of the earth the natural wealth of the soil in the speediest possible time, and we see how this is gradually growing. The first step was the formation of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, the Chamber of Mines under an *alias*, and the first act of that association was to stamp out all independent contracting of Kaffir labour. It placed all recruiting of Kaffir labour in the hands of the trust; it prevented Kaffirs from choosing the mine at which they would work—they must accept the alternative of working in what was perhaps the deadliest mine in the Transvaal, or of refusing to have their labour accepted at all. Then there was the fearful mortality in the mines, enough of itself to deter black labour, a mortality which was remediable because it has, in fact, very largely been remedied. We next had the lowering of Kaffir wages by 50 per cent. Were these things not enough of themselves to deter Kaffirs from seeking freely and spontaneously the labour that was offered to them? I do not hesitate, my Lords, to say that the combination of these circumstances produced what was the desired effect—namely, an artificial scarcity of black labour, and that artificial scarcity had to be proved before a case for the importation of the Chinaman could be accepted. Then we had the appointment of the Labour Commission—a Commission consisting of ten persons, eight of whom were publicly committed to the introduction of Asiatic labour, who were bidden to say whether or not this scarcity existed, but were forbidden to enter into what was in the minds of all—whether it was proper or desirable to introduce Chinese labour. Then we had repeated statements by Lord Milner that the colony was in favour of the importation of the Chinese, although a *referendum*, which was the only means of ascertaining that opinion, was refused. The objection taken by the Colonial Secretary to the *referendum* was a strange one. He said such an expedient was unknown in any part of the British Empire, forgetting apparently that it has been put in practice in South Australia, in New Zealand, in New South Wales, and, only the other day, to decide upon the important question of the Australian Commonwealth. The objection taken by Lord Milner was on another ground. He said the urgency of the question was so great that he could not wait for a *referendum*, because it would take six months, whereas at that very time a census of the colony was taken which only took seven weeks. These were, of course, only palpable excuses, and nothing more than excuses, to prevent the opinion of the colony being taken. These are the salient facts surrounding the importation of the Chinaman into South Africa. By June last year the Chinamen began to arrive. Exertions had been made by the Colonial Secretary—very laudable exertions—to impose conditions on the importers in favour of the labourer, conditions that were nearly always successfully resisted by Lord Milner, representing the policy of the mineowners.

Now I come to direct the attention of the House to certain declarations and statements made by His Majesty's Government, and to ask the noble Duke whether he conscientiously thinks those declarations and pledges have been fulfilled. The first important question was the question of wages. On March 21st, 1904, Mr. Lyttelton, after stating that the average Kaffir wage was 50s. for thirty days work, made this statement in the House of Commons—

"Chinamen would receive in the Transvaal at least 2s. a day. I stand here and give the House my assurance that the Chinese will receive at least the amount I have specified."

That is 60s. for thirty days work. Mr. Lyttelton proposed, but Lord Milner and the mineowners very briefly disposed of that. Lord Milner insisted upon a minimum of 1s. a day instead of 2s., and then made this statement—

"He finally promised that if within six months the average pay was not 50s. for thirty days work the minimum should be raised from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per day."

So that while the 2s. a day disappeared 1s. 6d. a day took its place. Are the Chinese now receiving the minimum of 1s. 6d. a day? On February 13th of this year, Mr. Evans, the Superintendent of the Foreign Labour Department in Johannesburg, reported that a certain number, not specified, were working at 1s. per day, and on April 8th last he reported that there had not been time to compute the rate of wages paid, but it appeared to be under 50s. Are the Government going to insist on the terms of Lord Milner's and Mr. Lyttelton's pledges being fulfilled—namely, that in each case where the average pay does not, in six months, reach 50s. for thirty days work, the day's pay shall not be less than 1s. 6d.? I think I am entitled to put that Question to the noble Duke, and to ask him, if that has not been done, to take steps to enforce it.

The next declaration made with regard to the Chinese was that they should have ample access to the Courts of the country for the redress of grievances. The Chinese Government, to their credit, insisted upon this being made part of the bond, and in the Anglo-Chinese Convention the following words occur—

"The emigrant shall have free access to the Courts of justice to obtain redress for injuries to his person or property."

And on March 10th, 1904, Mr. Lyttelton used these words—

"The Chinese labourers have the same right of access to Courts as all other subjects in His Majesty's dominions."

That was Mr. Lyttelton's pledge. Has that pledge been fulfilled? As a matter of fact, the Chinaman has no right of access to the Courts in any case except by leave of an inspector. Would the noble Duke, if he went to China and was told he had free access to the Courts of China for redress of any grievances that he might have there, consider that he had free access if he could only go to these Courts by the leave and licence of a Chinese official? Though I am not putting the civilisation of the Chinese on a par with our civilisation, yet in the eye of the Chinaman the official inspector is a foreigner just as much as in the eye of the noble Duke the Chinese official in China would be. Surely unfettered access to a Court of justice is one of the privileges of all who live under British rule, and I ask the noble Duke candidly whether he will not admit that unfettered access to a Court of justice is an essential part of the life of a Chinaman under the British flag, and an essential part of any Ordinance? And yet on April 13th Mr. Lyttelton, at Stratford, said this—

"For nearly half a century a similar system had been on the Statute-book of the Colonies, and the British Guiana Ordinance, embodying every essential element of the Transvaal Ordinance, had been sanctioned by the Government of which Lord Rosebery was Prime Minister and Lord Ripon Colonial Secretary."

Mr. Lyttelton forgot to mention that in the terms of the British Guiana Ordinance there is no interposition of any official between the labourer and the Court of justice, and it is no answer if the noble Duke says to me that he knows of no complaint having been refused. That is not the point I urge. I have not got any concrete instance to place before the noble Duke of complaints having been refused, but I think it is very likely that complaints may have been made and not understood. But that is not my point. My point is that it was declared that free and unfettered access should be had. The right of a subject to have free and unfettered access to a Court of justice is part of our common law system, but that is refused to the Chinese labourer, as he can only secure access to the Court through the medium of a foreign official.

I approach now a more disagreeable task. Mr. Lyttelton declared, when there was some point made by the Chinese Government as to the Chinese labourer being exempt from flogging, that there was no power under the Ordinance to impose flogging upon any Chinaman. I should like to know what was the object of introducing into the Transvaal in the month of July, labourers having begun to arrive in June, an Ordinance enlarging the power of the resident magistrate to administer flogging. Was the law not adequate up to that time? Were there offences which could not be met without this extra penalty? What was the meaning of introducing a fresh law, enlarging the powers of administering flogging? I should like the noble Duke to answer that Question. By Ordinance No. 26 of 1904, which was assented to on July 28th, and has been put in practice, power was extended to the resident magistrate to order flogging in cases where the conviction was a first conviction of robbery, in cases of any statutory offence for which flogging could only be given for a second conviction, in cases of assaults of an aggravated character, or with intent to do serious bodily harm, or intent to commit any offence. So that, according to this law, if a Chinaman hustled his neighbour in an attempt to escape from his compound he would be guilty of an assault with intent to commit an offence, for which he could be given twenty-five lashes. It may be said that the occasion has never arisen, but I ask the noble Duke why this Ordinance was passed, and whether it has been put in practice. I ask him further, is there a case in which it has been imposed upon a white man, and immediately upon appeal to higher authorities the judgment of the resident magistrate has been reversed on the ground that the Act was never intended to apply to white men?

We know there have been riots, and we know that this Ordinance has been put into force, and that Chinamen have been flogged under it. We had a case yesterday—I do not vouch for it, but it was in the papers—which, if true, shows a most regrettable state of things in the compounds. The noble Duke, I have no doubt, must have read the letter. It may be exaggerated and absolutely unfounded, but at any rate it is worth the noble Lord's attention, and ought to be investigated. It is stated in this letter that Chinamen, if they refuse to go to work, are tied up by their pigtails to poles so that their heels are off the ground, and then lashed with canes, by the orders of the compound managers, at the hands of the Chinese police. I hope it is not true, but at any rate it is vouched for on authority, and I hope the noble Duke will make inquiries and ascertain the truth or otherwise of it.

I pass from this to another unpleasant subject, and that is the importation of the women. On Februrary 16th, 1904, the Colonial Secretary used these words—

> "We were advised in this matter by men of the most experience in the whole Empire on the subject of Chinese labour. We were advised that the coolies would not go without their women folk. Manifestly it would be wrong that they should go without their women folk."

Does the noble Duke agree with that language? I am sure he must agree with it.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): The noble and learned Lord has not read the context of the Colonial Secretary's statement.

*LORD COLERIDGE: I think the next sentence was to this effect, that they should have the opportunity of bringing their wives if they pleased. I think that was the substance of it.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am alluding to the earlier part of the quotation the noble and learned Lord made.

*LORD COLERIDGE: The Colonial Secretary stated—

> "Manifestly it would be wrong that they should go without their women folk."

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: "If they were desirous of taking them with them."

*LORD COLERIDGE: I do not think that was the exact language, but it does not affect what I am saying, that whether they wanted to bring their wives with them or not it was manifestly wrong that they should go without them. Noble Lords may think it a matter of ridicule, but I can assure the House that in every other Ordinance for the last sixty years which has been sanctioned by the Government provisions have been made for the compulsory bringing over of a portion of the women belonging to the indentured labourers. The last information I have with regard to this was given by the Colonial Secretary on January 10th this year. It was that 4,000 wives were registered at Chingwangtao and 895 at Hong-Kong but only two women and twelve children had actually been brought over. I appeal to the most rev. Primate on this matter. In March of this year, the most rev. Primate said—

> "Show me that it clearly brings about or implies the encouragement of immorality in the sense in which we ordinarily use the word, and I am almost ashamed to say anything so obvious, I should not call the so-called necessity worth a single moment's consideration. In such a case there could be but one answer given by any honest man, 'the thing is wrong, and, please God, it shall not take place.'"

What the most rev. Primate apprehended, according to the last official returns, has taken place, and I appeal to him to make his words good in the course of this debate. The way this is met is most astonishing. On the one hand we are told that the Chinaman is well fed, and lightly worked, and then in the next breath Mr. Lyttelton tells the House of Commons that the work is so steady and the diet so frugal that all the passions of mankind seem to be obliterated in the Chinese. I hope the noble Duke will either explain the figures or give us some assurance that the Government intend to remedy what obviously is a dreadful state of things.

The Blue-book is full of riots and disturbances, made light of by the foreign labour superintendent. If you want the type of the official mind you have it disclosed glaringly in Mr. Evans; and when we find men wrapped in contemplation of the happiness of the Chinese under their new conditions, we ask why there are 300 desertions (equal to eighty per 1,000 per annum) from these happy compounds in three months. I think we can read between the lines as to what is going on.

The last point I want to urge on the noble Duke is the question of white labour. To utilise as much white labour as possible would be the object, I should have thought, of every Britisher. The Government's policy seems to be that of the mineowner, or rather to serve that of the mineowner—to get labour as cheaply as possible, and, above all, to keep out the white man for fear he should grow independent. Mr. Lyttelton, speaking at Exeter on May 5th, said—

> "The result of the introduction of Chinamen has been that 3,000 white men are employed on the mines in addition to those that were employed before the introduction of that labour, and the result is that in round figures £500,000 has been received by British artisans."

That is a completely misleading statement. I say, and I think I shall show, that the employment of Chinese has led to a decrease in the amount of white labour employed. Take the year from June, 1903, to June, 1904. The proportion of white men to Kaffirs during those twelve months remained practically stationary, at one in six in round figures. On March 31st, 1905, which is the date of the last Return we have, there were 105,184 Kaffirs working in the mines, and at the proportion of one-sixth there would have been 17,530 white men. But the number of white men employed at that date was only 16,235. Following that proportion, if the Chinese had not arrived we should have had at least 1,300 or 1,400 more white men employed than there are now. In addition to that there are over 34,000 Chinese employed not represented by a single white man, and Lord Milner does not hold out any hope that the proportion of white men to coloured labourers will in future be greater than one in fourteen.

Just see what that means. The Report of the Labour Commission stated that without allowing for any expansion of the mines the mineowners wanted at once 197,644 labourers, and if the finding of the Commission is correct—that there is no adequate supply of labour in Central and Southern Africa to meet these requirements—we may expect that the difference will be made up of Chinamen, and that means, to make up this deficiency alone, an addition of 67,000 odd more Chinamen; so that, according to these figures, to meet present requirements alone you will have working in the mines over 100,000 Chinese indentured labourers. And if we are to believe the statement of the Commission that they would want in five years 196,000 more, we are faced with the prospect of having something like 300,000 Chinese indentured labourers working in the mines under the Transvaal Ordinance. Considering that the total white adult population, British and Boer combined, of that country is less than 100,000, this is a prospect which I should think even the noble Duke would regard with some apprehension. It was urged, in support of the contention that Chinamen were a valuable aid to civilisation, that their presence would lead to the development of subsidiary industries, and glowing pictures were painted by Lord Milner and others of the number of industries that would be started owing to the influx of this vast amount of servile labour. I never could understand how that could be the case, because the dividends were all to go to Europe and the wages apparently were all to go to China. It was said, "Oh, but there is the feeding." I am told, and there again the noble Duke may confirm my statement, that this great trust of mineowners is going itself to undertake the feeding of the Chinamen, and that in the centre of Johannesburg vast works are now being erected for the purpose of grasping—from a business point of view no doubt it is quite right — the profits which would naturally flow therefrom. If this be so, where will all the subsidiary industries come in?

In 1903—I am now speaking from official documents—the amount of gold got from the Transvaal was £12,500,000 in round figures. In 1904, including seven months of Chinese labour, there were over £16,000,000 taken out—an increase in gold extraction of, to give the exact figures, £3,465,561. Therefore the mineowners and the shareholders got £3,500,000 more in 1904 than in 1903, greatly no doubt by reason of the employment of Chinese labour. How did that help the Transvaal? If these subsidiary industries are to grow up and develop the country, you would imagine some sign of it in the Revenue Returns. The figures have been given from July to February, 1903–4, and from July to February, 1904–5, the first a period when there were no Chinese, and the second a period covering the Chinese. What do we find? From July to February, 1903–4, the revenue was £2,848,887; and the revenue from July to February, 1904–5, when there were £3,500,000 more being dug out, was only £2,638,001, a decrease in actual revenue of over £210,000. Does that not establish what we have always said on this side of the House, that this is a curse to the country? You are by means of this labour taking out the wealth of the country; you are not planting the country with British colonists; you are increasing the dividends to the mineowners and the shareholders, and you are actually at the same moment impoverishing the country from which the gold is extracted. These are figures with which the noble Duke ought to deal.

Now we are to have a new Constitution, which seems to me to be a very timid, half-hearted kind of thing. By apportioning electoral areas according to the number of adult males instead of according to population, what do you do? You simply place the majority in the hands of the mining interest. Men who are not subservient to, or who are not employed by, the mining trust had better pack up their traps and leave the Transvaal. I have no doubt that those who authorised this thought it a very ingenious and clever device for securing a decision from the new Government in favour of the Chinese policy. Any permanent element represented by the married man with a family who means to stay is subordinated entirely to the transient unmarried man who derives his livelihood from the employment of the mineowners and may be trusted not to disregard their wishes. I ask the noble Duke, Is this the last word of the great Conservative Party, who talk so much about Imperial greatness? Is this the last word in Empire-building? If this is to be the policy of the future it means this, that one great Party in the State has lost all its old faith, the faith in the civic principles on which this Empire was founded, and regards the cheap and rapid extraction of wealth from a country, and not its permanent welfare and the permanent welfare of its inhabitants, as the best test of a successful colonial administration. I stand by the old way. I believe in the old idea of Empire, and it is because I profoundly disagree with the Government's policy that I have brought forward the Motion which stands in my name.

Moved, that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to the importation of Chinese indentured labourers into the Transvaal, and to the conditions under which they are being imported into and are living in the Transvaal.—(*The Lord Coleridge.*)

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: My Lords, the noble and learned Lord has in the course of his remarks addressed to me a series of Questions, and in my observations in reply to him I will endeavour to answer some of them. He was courteous enough to say that I had, in previous debates in your Lordships' House, done my best to reply to those Questions which he had put to me, and I will attempt to do the same this afternoon. I fear, however, that I cannot follow the noble and learned Lord in his comments upon the new Constitution which the Transvaal may shortly receive. I think that that is such a vast subject that it might profitably be debated on an occasion by itself. Anyway, I do not propose to intermingle the consideration of that question with the question which is before the House this evening—the result of the immigration of Chinese into South Africa. The noble and learned Lord prefaced his remarks by the old assertions as to whether the Transvaal was in favour of receiving the Chinese or not, and he twitted His Majesty's Government yet again for not having had a *referendum*. I cannot help thinking that these matters were thoroughly discussed last session. They were debated at frequent intervals, and your Lordships formed your own opinion on the policy of the Government and recorded it in due form. I do not think I need follow my noble and learned friend in further discussion upon those particular points. Nor do I propose to follow him in his description of the position of the Transvaal as it appears to him to-day. The only comment which I should desire to repudiate on behalf of the Colonial Office and His Majesty's Government is the statement which he made, that in his opinion the colonists in South Africa care only for themselves and have not in any way the welfare or the interest of the country at heart. I cannot help feeling that that is a remark which is not likely to cement the good feeling between this country and those who reside in the Transvaal, and His Majesty's Government cannot share that opinion.

Lord COLERIDGE: I beg the noble Duke's pardon. I did not say the colonists at large. I said the particular mineowners engaged in extracting the wealth.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: But they are members of the British Empire. The noble and learned Lord proceeded to discuss the question of the mortality among the Kaffirs, and admitted that there was a great reduction in the mortality, which is a matter of satisfaction to me, and equally a matter of satisfaction to His Majesty's Government. I think he might have been sufficiently generous to admit that it is largely due to the action of His Majesty's Government in taking the greatest precautions—precautions which I admit noble Lords opposite expressed their desire that we should put in force—that we have been enabled to reduce the mortality of the Kaffirs from seventy per 1,000 to something like forty per 1,000. The noble and learned Lord went on to deal with the question of the proportion of white labour to coloured labour, and tried to argue, from the fact that whereas a year or two ago the proportion of white skilled labour to coloured unskilled labour was one in six and to-day it may be one in eight, that consequently the increase of white men was not really apparent. What does Lord Milner say on this matter? Lord Milner says that the ratio which existed prior to the war is now being gradually attained to, and it is probable that it will be exceeded. He says, it is true, as quoted by the noble and learned Lord, that the ratio in certain conditions may amount to one in fourteen; but the noble and learned Lord omitted to add what was the whole point of Lord Milner's observations, that this could only be obtained if there was an unlimited supply of skilled white labour and of unskilled coloured labour.

I understand that the noble and learned Lord measures the prosperity of South Africa and of the mines there largely by the ratio between the white skilled workmen and the coloured unskilled labourers. I venture to think that that is not altogether a very correct form of reasoning. Imagine an industry in a great commercial centre in this country. During a time of depression and great stress the services of the least skilled artisans in that industry would be dispensed with, and only the skilled labourers who were concerned in the management and administration of that industry would be maintained. Under these conditions it is obvious that the ratio between the skilled artisans and the unskilled workmen would be very high; but when the industry was again in a prosperous condition the unskilled artisans would be re-employed, and consequently the ratio between skilled artisans and unskilled would decline. Precisely similar conditions exist in South Africa. There is an irreducible minimum of white skilled labour below which it is impossible to fall if the mines are to be worked in a proper way. In the days of the dearth of unskilled labour the number of men connected with the management could not possibly be reduced, and though unskilled labour was getting less and less, yet the white skilled labour had to be maintained to manage and conduct the mines. In those circumstances the number of white men to the coloured, of course, was very high, and this condition of affairs was exaggerated by the fact that unskilled white labour had to be employed in order to make good the deficiency in the unskilled coloured labour. The result was that the ratio between whites and coloured unskilled labourers was obviously high, but the moment the supply of labour became abundant, owing to the immigration of indentured labourers from China, the margin had to be made good, and consequently the ratio between white and coloured exhibited a decline. I do not think that the test which the noble and learned Lord has put forward this afternoon is either an accurate test or one to which a great deal of importance should be attached.

His Majesty's Government rely upon this fact, a fact which the noble and learned Lord cannot get over, that to-day there are 3,000 more white men employed in the mines in South Africa than there were prior to the advent of the Chinese. I would remind the noble and learned Lord still further, that he will see in a Parliamentary Paper that before the advent of the Chinese immigration of artisans in other phases of life was at its lowest ebb, but ever since the importation of Chinese this immigration has increased week by week and month by month. I do not think it was suggested by the noble and learned Lord that these 3,000 extra white men on the mines were employed entirely for the purpose of building the compounds. I remember that in a previous debate the noble Lord on the Front Bench opposite, Lord Monkswell, raised that point, and I daresay he would be glad if I took this opportunity of telling him the exact condition of affairs. Out of the twenty-seven mines employing Chinese, five mines erected their compounds by outside contractors, and in the construction of the compounds at the other twenty-two mines 1,100 whites were employed. Four hundred and thirty-five have been absorbed in the permanent staff and distributed on the mines, and one-half of the remainder are employed in other industries. Therefore, we see that there are only about 300 men out of these 3,000 who can be directly accounted for as working on the building of the compounds. I think that disposes altogether of the contention that these extra white men were really only employed for the purpose of erecting the compounds. The noble and learned Lord did not raise the question of machine as against hand-drills, and I will, therefore, not dwell upon it, although it is a matter upon which much has been said by members of the Party to which the noble and learned Lord belongs. The noble and learned Lord suggested that these Chinamen could not get redress if ill-treated, and had no means of putting their views before a Court of law.

Lord COLERIDGE: Except through an inspector.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: The noble and learned Lord will see it stated in a Parliamentary Paper published in August of last year, that every labourer shall be entitled to proceed to the offices of the superintendent for the purpose of making complaint against his employer, or to enable him to have access to a Court of law in order to obtain redress for injury to his person or property, or in order to attend as a party to or witness in civil or criminal proceedings in such Court. I think that provision meets the case which has been raised by the noble and learned Lord. If he wishes to examine this matter still more closely he will see further comments on the point on pages 86 and 87. I would remind the noble and learned Lord that the Protector of Chinese is there for the purpose of receiving any complaints from the Chinamen and helping them in any reasonable complaint that they may bring forward against the treatment received from their employers.

Then the noble and learned Lord proceeded to comment upon the system under which the wages are paid by the mineowners. He alluded to the fact that the Secretary of State had stated in the House of Commons that the Chinese might receive 2s. a day. That statement was made before this matter had been definitely decided upon. Noble Lords opposite smile. It was made before the minimum charge had been decided upon by Lord Milner. We naturally consulted Lord Milner upon this point. We considered his opinion of the highest value, and it was finally decided that the Chinamen were to receive a minimum wage of 1s. a day. That was done in conformity with our policy that the Chinaman was not to supplant, but supplement, the Kaffir, and in order to ensure that policy being successfully effected it was essential that the Chinaman should have a wage which was not much lower than that received by the Kaffir.

The system of wages is carefully explained in the form of contract of service, Clause 6 on page 10 in Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 2183] gives it fully. Clause 6 is the important clause, and the noble and learned Lord will see there that the Chinaman is entitled to a minimum wage of 1s. for every day of ten hours, or a labourer may do piecework and receive the same wages instead of working for the ten hours if he and his employer are prepared to make those terms between themselves. Payment is made to the labourers in the forty-seven different occupations which they may undertake at rates varying from 1s. to 2s. 6d. per day; and the clause further provides that at the expiration of six months, if the labourers in any particular mine have not been earning on an average 50s. a month, then the minimum wage shall be increased from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a day. It was expected by those who were competent to judge that the lazy men would not earn 1s. a day, but that those engaged in piecework would earn that amount, and that those who were engaged in the forty-seven different occupations would be able to earn something over 1s. a day. It was expected that the average wage which these men would earn in the mines for a period of six months would approximate to 50s. a month. It is too early yet to say for certain whether this average wage has been earned or not. We have not received information of an authoritative character yet on the subject, but it is perfectly clear from Clause 6 that if they have not earned 50s. on an average per month, then they will receive a minimum wage of 1s. 6d. a day. The main objects which the Government were anxious to secure were that the Chinaman should receive in the first instance a minimum wage, and that the wage should be one which would not in any way undercut the rate at which the Kaffir was paid. That these objects have undoubtedly been attained is evident from the fact that the Kaffirs employed on the mines to-day are more numerous than before the arrival of the Chinese, and, so far as I am aware, they are earning as good wages as they did before the Chinese came.

I turn to the question of the riots. The noble and learned Lord reminded us that there had been 300 desertions on the part of the Chinese from the compounds. The accurate number is 251, but that is not material. The term "desertion," as I understand it, is a most misleading one. All that desertion means in this case is that the Chinaman has wilfully left his premises without taking the trouble to apply for a permit. It does not mean that he has escaped from the compound and run off to the veldt and had to be brought back. I am sure noble Lords will appreciate the importance of the Chinaman not being allowed to leave the premises of the compound without a permit, and if he will not take the trouble to get a permit it is clear that he must be punished for this neglect. That accounts for the figure of 251 desertions.

LORD COLERIDGE: I gave the figure as 300; the exact figure is 299.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I will not quarrel with the noble and learned Lord. He may be right, but the point is not important. If he will turn to the end of this Parliamentary Paper, page 120, he will see there an account of the desertions of Kaffirs. Over 8,000 Kaffirs deserted during the year 1903, as compared now with only 300 Chinese. The noble and learned Lord offered no criticism against the administration of affairs at the mines because 8,000 Kaffirs chose to desert, but he makes the greatest point he possibly can of the fact that there have been 300 desertions among the Chinese.

LORD COLERIDGE: The 300 desertions were during three months: that would be at that rate 1,200 in the year.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: That may or may not be the case; but, if the noble Lord attaches so much importance to desertion, I think he ought to have selected the case of the Kaffirs instead of that of the Chinese.

The noble and learned Lord asked for information with regard to flogging. If he will examine this Blue-book carefully he will see that there have been only five cases of flogging as a result of these riots. He further asked how this flogging was administered and who was entitled to give it. If he will turn to page 41 he will see this statement, made by Lord Milner—

> "By the law of the colony no sentence of whipping imposed by a magistrate can be carried out till the record is sent to and sentence confirmed by a Judge of the Supreme Court."

I think that is sufficient protection to ensure that no improper or exaggerated form of whipping is given to the Chinese. I do not think I need say anything more with regard to riots. The noble and learned Lord did not, I am glad to say, attach too great importance to them. There have been a certain number of riots, but few of them have been very important. One took place at the Randfontein Mine; it arose over the question of the average wage, and that was a dispute between the Chinese and the mine managers. So far as we are aware, all questions of difference and dispute have now been arranged, and we do not anticipate that there will be any further trouble. The noble and learned Lord will see that these riots are becoming fewer in number. During the last seven months of the year 1904 there were seven riots; this year there have only been four riots, although there are a greater number of Chinese in the mines now than last year. I think Mr. Evans's prophecy is a right and proper one, that the longer the Chinese are there and the more there are of them in the district the fewer will be the riots or disturbances among them.

I think I have dealt with the majority, or at any rate with the most important of the points raised by the noble and learned Lord. I should like to refer for one moment to the condition of life in the compounds. What does Mr. Evans say on this matter? It is fully set forth in his long statement contained in this Blue-book. He says the accommodation for the Chinese is excellent, the rooms are built of brick, the places are well ventilated, the drains are excellent, there is electric light for heating, there are most admirable bathing-houses, and in some compounds there are dining halls which will hold as many as 500 Chinamen. The compounds are not prisons. The gate of the compound is open all day, and the Chinaman has the right to go in and out just as he thinks fit. The hospitals are admirable, and there are Chinese doctors as well as, if necessary, a European doctor. Inspectors are constantly visiting the compounds. The freedom of the men is commented upon. They are allowed to go from one compound to another and exchange views with their friends in the neighbouring mines, and if they have any point of view which they wish to put to a friend in the neighbourhood they are capable of doing so. Mr. Evans concludes his report—

> "The experiment has been an undoubted success, and will be more so from day to day if the present condition of fair treatment and honest supervision is thoroughly maintained."

But Mr. Evans is not the only authority I can quote to substantiate the statement that the Chinese are properly treated in the compounds. The noble and learned Lord and noble Lords opposite will not attach the same importance that we do to the opinion of Mr. Evans, but I may say, in parenthesis, that Mr. Evans has for twenty years been in close touch with the Chinese in the Straits Settlements. His opinion is one based upon long experience, and I think we are entitled to give to it every consideration. But I prefer to quote other opinions. I have the opinions of public men who have visited the compounds themselves. I notice that Sir Gilbert Parker, who visited the compounds, told the House of Commons that the Chinese had as comfortable quarters as anyone in the House; and Mr. Worsley-Taylor spoke upon the admirable system of the compounds, how well the men were looked after in them, and said he was thoroughly satisfied with the treatment they received. The Secretary of State, when he pointed out the great value of this testimony of two Members of Parliament who had visited the compounds for themselves, was interrupted by the Opposition, not by denials, not by expressions of disapproval, but by expressions of disappointed and reluctant agreement. I now turn to one other authority, whose opinion cannot be ignored, an authority to whom noble Lords opposite, I know, will attach the greatest importance and consideration. I allude to the opinion of a no less distinguished individual than Mr. Burt, the Member for Morpeth. What did Mr. Burt say? When he was interviewed upon the question of the treatment of the Chinese in South Africa, he said—

> "I must add that I have inspected the compounds, kitchens, dining-halls, and all arrangements for the hospitals, and, having seen the food supplied to them, I do not think that with regard to the food and treatment there can be any reasonable complaint."

He went on to add that in his opinion the Chinese were treated even better than the Kaffirs themselves. These are the views of gentlemen in public positions having very different political opinions, and yet you will note that there is absolutely unanimous agreement upon this one question of the treatment of the Chinese in the compounds.

I do not wish to be too controversial upon this matter, but I cannot help being reminded that this treatment of the Chinese, substantiated as it is by various authorities, differs very much from these prophecies which noble Lords opposite made when we debated this question last session. What did noble Lords say at that time? The noble Marquess opposite termed the conditions under which the Chinese would be employed "semi-slavery," and he called them prisoners. The noble Lord beside him, Lord Carrington, ventured to describe to your Lordships what a compound was like. He said—

> "I do not know if you have seen a native compound. I have, and a more horrible sight it is impossible to conceive. Imagine a piece of ground surrounded by corrugated iron, crowded with natives, some smoking, others sitting and gambling, and others watching a dance, to say the least of it, somewhat wanting in delicacy."

That was a gloomy and remarkable statement, and one which will hardly compare with those testimonies I have just read to your Lordships. The Leader of the Opposition in your Lordships' House informed us that the Chinese were to be placed in cages, though I admit he afterwards admitted that he used the term in a figurative sense; and it was Lord Monkswell who said subsequently that if they were not placed in cages there would be very few of them left. The noble Lord on the Cross Benches, Lord Stanmore, predicted that if the Chinese were herded together in close barracks they would escape by another way, that of suicide. As a matter of fact, only two have escaped in that way, which is, I believe, a much smaller proportion than exists by suicide in the Celestial Land itself. The right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Hereford, in his fervour, also said that these Chinamen were no better than animated Oriental implements. To what degree these statements have been falsified by subsequent events it is hardly necessary for me to state. We are entitled to draw our own conclusions, and I think the country will draw this conclusion, that they have been considerably misinformed as to the real facts of this case by the somewhat rash and indiscriminate comments of noble Lords opposite and the Party to which they belong.

Noble Lords opposite are admirable critics; they criticise our policy in this House with great effect and with consummate skill; but I cannot say the same of them in their capacity of prophets, for there is no prediction which they have made which has not been totally falsified by subsequent events. They told us that the employment of white men in South Africa would be reduced by the advent of the Chinese. There are 3,000 more white men to-day in South Africa than there were before the arrival of the Chinese. They told us that the white man would be deprived of the means of livelihood and that his wages would be reduced by the advent of the Chinese. There is now £500,000 a year spent in South Africa in wages to white men over and above the amount that was paid prior to the arrival of the Chinese. They told us that the immigration of the Chinese would oust the Kaffir from his legitimate employment. There are more Kaffirs to-day in the mines than there were previous to the arrival of the Chinese, and they are earning just as good wages as formerly. They told us that the advent of the Chinese would lower the wages both of the white man and the Kaffir; but the wages of the white man and the Kaffir are not lower than they were before the arrival of the Chinese. In the face of facts like these it is not surprising that a gentleman like Mr. Quin, who is the chief opponent of Chinese labour in South Africa, should have stated, when interviewed on the subject—

> "The Chinese are here, the Ordinance is passed, the people appear to be contented, there is no objection raised, and, as far as I am concerned, in any politics that I may take part in future the question is absolutely finished."

On this question of Chinese labour the majority of noble Lords of this House have already formed their opinion and have recorded that opinion on several occasions, but if the noble and learned Lord opposite persists in rushing in where Mr. Burt will not venture and where Mr. Quin will not dare to tread——

LORD COLERIDGE: Will the noble Duke say wherein I differ from Mr. Burt?

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Mr. Burt says the condition of the Chinese is excellent.

LORD COLERIDGE: I never assailed it. I never said that the Chinese were not well fed and well housed. We feed and house our horses well when we want them to work.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I certainly inferred from the noble and learned Lord's speech that he was not as satisfied as Mr. Burt was as to the treatment meted out to the Chinese. Anyway, the noble and learned Lord has ventured on ground which Mr. Quin declines entirely to tread; and I cannot feel that the remarks which the noble and learned Lord has made in the course of his speech this afternoon can be considered in any way as injurious to the policy of His Majesty's Government.

Earl CARRINGTON: My Lords, after listening to the very powerful speech of my noble and learned friend behind me, and to the speech of the noble Duke who has replied on behalf of the Government, I am still more at a loss than ever to make out what possible justification His Majesty's Government have had in sanctioning this Chinese Ordinance. It would seem that there might be two justifications for it—first, the universal consensus of British and Colonial opinion in favour of it; and secondly, the fact that it would of itself *ipso facto* bring an enormous quantity of British white labour into South Africa and make it a white self-governing colony. But so far as I was able to follow the noble Duke I do not think he tried to prove either of those two things. He laid great stress on the fact that there were 3,000 more whites employed now than formerly, and I suppose he was justified in making a great point of that; but I would respectfully remind him that before the time of the Raid, in the early nineties, British workmen were arriving in South Africa in great numbers. I remember Mr. Cecil Rhodes saying on many occasions that if the Imperial Government would only hold their hand and not interfere with South Africa the Britishers were coming in in such large numbers every month that the country by sheer force of numbers would fall like a ripe apple into our hands. I think, therefore, that the boast that 3,000 more white men are employed on account of the influx of 36,000 rather low-class Chinese coolies is not a feather in the cap of His Majesty's Government.

The noble Duke proceeded to call my noble and learned friend behind me to task with regard to the desertions. He said there were very few desertions of Chinese in comparison with the desertions of Kaffirs that took place previously. These are quarterly Returns after all, and 300 desertions per quarter is 1,200 a year, and that took place when there were 14,000 Chinese in South Africa, whereas the averaged desertion of Kaffirs, when 80,000 were employed, was 8,000 a year. I am not much of an arithmetician, but I calculate that this comes out at about the same average. The noble Duke went on to quote the opinion of a certain Mr. Quin, and he rightly made a great point of the speech which that gentleman delivered, in which he said—

> "The Chinese are here . . . . As far as I am concerned in politics, the question is finished."

Lord Milner made a great point of that, and he wrote, in a despatch—

> "Personally I am convinced that the last of all serious opposition has been spoken."

Lord Milner quoted Mr. Quin's statement, but, unintentionally of course, left out a very important part of that speech, for Mr. Quin said—

> "Please understand that I speak for myself."

There is a proverb that "One swallow does not make a summer," and one Mr. Quin does not make all the white people in the Transvaal pro-Chows. In considering the statement made by Lord Milner that we have heard the last of all serious opposition, we must remember the conditions under which these people live. We have had a case lately of Members of the House of Commons issuing a manifesto to their tenants, saying that they would consider it a great want of respect to them if their tenants voted against the political opinions of the landlords. What is done in England is done also, without any bad motive, I have no doubt, in the Transvaal, and after the treatment that was meted out to Mr. Moneypenny, of the *Johannesburg Star*, and to Mr. Creswell and others, the *employees* of these great companies must consider that it would be best at any rate to agree outwardly, whatever they may think inwardly, with these big houses in politics or else hold their tongues.

The noble Duke went on to speak of the way in which the Chinese are treated. No one is more pleased, I am sure, than the noble and learned Lord who called attention to this question to-day to know that they are well treated, but I think some of the credit for that is due to the Party to which I have the honour to belong, because we have through good report and bad report done the best we could to alleviate the conditions under which these men live, and we do claim some part of the credit for the good conditions under which they live. The noble Duke took me to task with regard to a description of a compound which I gave in the course of a discussion last year, but I would remind him that the compound I was speaking of was one I saw at Kimberley in 1891. I am glad to hear that a great advance has been made, and that the compounds are not really in the horrible condition now in which they were when I visited Kimberley. The noble Duke also quoted Mr. Burt. We are extremely glad that Members of Parliament on our side of the House, as well as Sir Gilbert Parker on the other, should have visited these compounds, and be able to join in giving credit where credit is due. Mr. Burt says there is nothing to find fault with in the treatment of the Chinese as far as feeding and living is concerned—I have heard that they have everything in the world they want except dry champagne—but Mr. Burt also made another very remarkable statement. He said that though the Chinese were well treated, wherever he went he found—

> "Among working men of all trades general unabated hostility against Chinese labour."

And he went so far as to say—and Mr. Burt is not a man who exaggerates or, as the French say, embroiders—that—

> "Even some mining Johannesburg directors (themselves strongly favourable to the Ordinance) frankly admitted it could never have been passed in any freely-elected Parliament."

Lord Milner is right, I think, when he declares that there will not be any more serious opposition as regards Chinese labour, but I do not think the noble Duke and his friends can consider it a great feather in their cap to have educated public opinion in a Crown colony up to this pitch, and to have assisted in making the Transvaal a plutocratic community, served by cheap alien labour under conditions which never would have been sanctioned if there had been a free Parliament in the country.

I feel so strongly upon this that I hope your Lordships will extend your indulgence to me for another five minutes while I state what I believe is the great danger of this Chinese Ordinance. The policy may or may not be popular in South Africa, but of one thing I am perfectly certain — namely, that the recent elections all over the country have shown that the Chinese policy of His Majesty's Government is extremely unpopular, disliked, and mistrusted by the people at large in this country. What I think is more important still is the feeling of hostility towards the Chinese Ordinance which exists in the self-governing Colonies throughout the Empire. Most of the newspapers in England are in favour of the Chinese policy, and so we do not hear much of it. But perhaps I may be permitted to call the attention of your Lordships to expressions of opinion with regard to this Ordinance on the part of the Parliaments of self-governing Colonies. In Australia, in March, 1904, the Upper House without a division, and the Lower House by fifty-four votes to five, passed Resolutions declaring that they had grave objection to Chinese labour in the Transvaal when it was permitted without a *referendum* or responsible Government being given to the Colony. In November, 1904, in New Zealand, the Upper House without a division, and the Lower House by fifty votes to four, deeply regretted the introduction of Chinese labour without the sanction by vote of the white population or responsible Government being granted. In Cape Colony, in November, 1904, the Parliament reaffirmed its anti-Chinese Resolution of July 2nd, 1903. In Canada, except in British Columbia, the question is not an acute one, and there has not been a Resolution in the Imperial Parliament upon it; but at British Columbia the poll-tax has been raised to £100 a head for each Chinaman who goes into the country, and they have passed some anti-Japanese legislation as well, which I understand has been disallowed by the Dominion Parliament.

What have the chief men of these colonies said on this subject? I will take a few very short quotations from their great Australian statesmen. Mr. Deakin, who is a great supporter of His Majesty's Government and of Mr.

Chamberlain's preferential tariff policy, says—

> "Why were we not told of this outcome of Chinese labour at the commencement of the struggle? We should have said, 'Keep your mines. Your cheapness is too dearly purchased. It is not to be bought by blood. No Empire can be made strong by such means.'"

Then I take Mr. Watson, the Labour Premier, also a great supporter of Mr. Chamberlain and preferential tariffs. He says—

> "We are told that Mr. Chamberlain is largely responsible for the introduction of Chinese in South Africa. Quite so. No one has protested more strongly than myself against that action, and I trust that those responsible will in the interests of the Empire meet their reward at the hands of the electors.'

Then Mr. Hughes, late Minister for Foreign Affairs in the first Commonwealth Parliament, said—

> "Speaking as far as I am able on behalf of my constituents, I will never vote for the despatch of another contingent to take part in a war if such an Ordinance as is now proposed be carried into effect."

This policy seemed to many of us a very dangerous one eighteen months ago, but at that time the circumstances were different. The great Empires of Britain and Russia were striving for supremacy in the Far East. Now, the whole thing is entirely changed, and it seems to me that the situation is far more dangerous now than it was eighteen months ago. Japan has developed into a first-rate Power. She will, I suppose, be sending her ambassadors to the Courts of all the great Powers of Europe, and the millions of Chinamen are bound to come under her moral and practical suasion. If there ever was a time when the Chinese question required careful and delicate handling, one would have thought it was the present, and yet this is the very time His Majesty's Government has selected to dump down into one of the nerve centres of the Empire 36,000 low-class Chinese coolies, some of whom I believe are criminals, accompanied by only two wives and six children. I ask, is this the time for the British Government to have granted to the mineowners a request which the late President Kruger himself, from the highest patriotic motives, absolutely and indignantly refused to take into consideration when it was proposed to him?

Two years ago, a statement was made which created a great sensation at the time. We were then told by Mr. Chamberlain that our great Empire was in peril. He also, in a later speech, compared the Empire to a loose bundle of sticks bound together by a thin tie of sentiment and sympathy. I do not think that was a very noble description of the British Empire, but I will not labour that point. In those two years men have been thinking over this speech, and a good many of us have come to the conclusion that if it is true that the Empire is in peril, may it not be that a great portion of that danger has been caused by the South African policy of the right hon. Gentleman himself? By the courtesy of the House, I have quoted some opinions of the different Colonial Governments, and I think I may fairly say that this Chinese question has set a match to that bundle of sticks loosely tied together which is smouldering to a dangerous extent, and which may, at any moment, burst out into a fierce flame of discontent, and all the more because this is no longer, as we were told, "an experiment"—it is a fixed policy; and in their addresses to the electors Conservative candidates openly say that they are in favour of the Chinese policy of His Majesty's Government.

The danger seems to me to be still more acute, because we are informed on the highest authority that the present Government do not intend to submit this question to the verdict of the electors or, indeed, any other question, as long as they are supported by a majority in the House of Commons. That means, in all human probability, that the Unionist Government will remain in power for another eighteen months. Noble Lords on the Front Bench opposite cheer that statement. Is that honestly a matter for hilarity and satisfaction when you think that within eighteen months we shall be face to face with an army of over 100,000 low-class Chinese coolies in the Transvaal, which we have been told by my noble friend behind me has 1,200,000 inhabitants all told, out of which less than 300,000 are whites. What are we who detest this Ordinance, who think it is un-British, and who would work fiercely and honestly to stop the torrent of it, to do? To whom are we to turn? We are laughed at and our opinions are derided; the Resolutions of the different self-governing Colonies are absolutely ignored; the outlook seems hopeless. To whom are we to turn?

I believe there is one last chance. There is only one man who is powerful enough to help us. Lord Lansdowne is one of the few living statesmen who has won his spurs in the wide world. He was Governor-General of Canada and Viceroy of India, and he holds in his hands the threads of those delicate manipulations with great Powers which men call "Foreign Affairs," to him I make my last appeal. If he can stand up in this House, which he leads with so much courtesy and ability, and tell us that he considers this Chinese Ordinance a policy that is in the best interests of the nation, a policy that is consistent with the high ideals of British prestige and statesmanship, I have nothing more to say. I have such respect for the noble Marquess that, so far as I am concerned, if he will get up and say that, he will take all the wind out of my sails. I ask him, Can he conscientiously stand up and say that my noble friend Lord Spencer, who leads the Opposition in your Lordships' House, was wrong when he wrote—

> "We should pause before we continue a policy which is the subject of such bitter contention and which has deeply stirred the moral sense of England and her Colonies."

Lord Spencer went on to say—

> "Is it right to continue this system of indentured labour beyond the obligations of existing contracts?"

I heard with the greatest regret the speech made by the Prime Minister at the Albert Hall when he was addressing several thousands of his supporters at the annual meeting of the Primrose League. He sneered and jeered at those who conscientiously are opposed to this Chinese Ordinance. I wish that it had happened to him to have spent six months or a year in a self-governing colony. He would then have known that beneath this conscientious objection to Chinese labour there lies a most poetic and pathetic vein of feeling. It is not only the death knell of British labour that they fear. There are other horrors too great for me to mention in this House. What they feel is that it must eventually be the death knell of home life. This Empire was won by sacrifice, and we are told that it can only be maintained by sacrifice. Ought we not as Englishmen to sacrifice a chance of immediate pecuniary advantage so as to meet the conscientious convictions of our brothers across the sea? Ought we not to try and justify the war by the fulfilment of those promises with which we went to war, and convince the colonists, who sent us their best and their bravest in the hour of need, that their brave soldiers who fought for the ideal of British supremacy and for the freedom of British colonisation have not fought and striven and died in vain.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I do not know that I can add very much to the information before your Lordships or help greatly towards the elucidation of the opinions that we should form upon this subject by saying the few words that I desire to say to-night. I have spoken on this subject four times already, and have explained to your Lordships what seemed to me to be alike its difficulties and its drawbacks, but as the noble and learned Lord who opened this discussion openly called upon me, I feel that it might seem cowardly or discourteous if I did not say a few words in reply. I have no right to expect, and I do not expect, that the view at which I have arrived upon this subject will be acceptable either to those who feel, as Lord Carrington does, that it was the bounden duty of the authorities at home to override what I believe is now admitted by almost everyone to be the general wish of the people of the Transvaal——

EARL CARRINGTON: No.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: As the noble Lord challenges me on that point I would refer him to the pamphlet issued by Mr. Creswell, in which that gentleman seems to admit that, however deeply he may regret it, the general opinion has gone round to that side. I do not, as I say, expect that the view at which I have arrived on this subject will be acceptable to those who feel that it was the bounden duty of the authorities at Downing Street to override the opinion of the large majority in the Transvaal, on the ground that the thing is so inherently mischievous and bad that no amount of conditions or limitations can make it anything but intolerable. Nor, again, can I expect to satisfy those who take the view that this Ordinance is an admirable plan in every respect, is good for the prosperity of the Transvaal, good for the Chinaman, and good even for the Kaffir in South Africa, and that it ought by all means to be encouraged. I share neither of those views. But I have honestly tried to get at the facts of the case so far as they are ascertainable from a perusal of the literature which has been published on the subject. I regard the matter as one in which the opinions of Lord Milner, Sir Arthur Lawley, and other high-minded and public-spirited men in the Transvaal are entitled to the fullest consideration and respect. On the other hand, it is only with the most marked limitations that I have felt it could be right for the authorities at home to give their sanction to an Ordinance which I honestly admit jars upon me whichever way I look at it, and one which it surprises me to think should have been felt to be desirable by those who initiated it.

I tried a year ago to explain what appeared to me to be the three conditions which ought to be imposed before any sanction could properly be given by the home authorities to such an arrangement as this. The first was that there should be no fraudulent enlistment; that men should not be brought away from their homes under pretences which should turn out to have been misleading. The next was that there should be in the life lived by these men nothing in the nature of what could properly be called slavery, that there should be no intolerable conditions imposed which we should feel to be impossible and discreditable when dealing with the difficult subject of the employment by a race of a superior grade in civilisation of members of a race of inferior grade. The third condition was that there should not be, by this incursion of the Chinese into the Transvaal, any element introduced of real peril as regards the morality of the community into which they entered. To that view I absolutely adhere.

I have looked with the greatest care, not merely to the official reports, but also to the hostile pamphlets written against this movement, to see whether or not these conditions appear to have been violated. With regard to the first condition, I think the information which has been brought before us on both sides shows that, so far as ingenuity could devise them, safeguards of every sort have been provided against the danger of fraudulent enlistment. Moreover, it is, I think, undisputed that the regions from which immigrants are now coming are in many cases regions to which letters are going back from those who are at work, and those, therefore, who are leaving for the Transvaal, have had an opportunity of knowing what those who have preceded them think and feel about it.

Then, with regard to the treatment of the Chinese when in the Transvaal, the question is so surounded with difficulties that I feel that the official testimony on the subject requires to be carefully checked by the utterances of those who observe the matter from a point of view hostile to the enactment as a whole. Mr. Creswell, in his pamphlet, declares that the statements as to slavery and as to the Chinese labourers being badly housed and badly treated are simply a mistake in fact, and that such allegations do harm to the cause he supports. Speaking from personal inspection, he says that the natives and Chinese in all the best mines have greater material comfort than they ever had before in their lives. That testimony can be abundantly supported from other sources, and your Lordships will remember that it comes from a man who is foremost in opposing the whole Ordinance.

When we come, however, to the third condition, the case is different. It is one which it appears to me has been too little considered by those who were first responsible for the movement, and also, as far as the Blue-book shows, by those who are at present administering the Ordinance in the Transvaal. It is a problem full of difficulty, and I am far from saying what ought to be done. It is strange that in a Blue-book so voluminous and thorough as this there should be not one single reference to this difficulty. Everybody believed, at first, that if the Chinaman was given the choice of taking his wife and family with him he would be likely to do so. We ought to have known better. On looking back to the controversies that took place fifty years ago about Chinese emigration to the West Indies and elsewhere, I find that it was stated by Mr. Alcock and others that the Chinese emigrant never did and never would take his wife with him. The more closely that I have inquired since into the usages of that people the more certainly does this appear to be true. It seems to me that the facilities which have been given are ample and generous, and the fact that they have not been taken advantage of shows that the Chinaman is following what is apparently the rule of his race. The fact is disquieting, and I should like to know a little more as to what it is likely to involve; for I do not feel satisfied with the testimony that has been given to us to-night to the effect that all is going right. It is impossible to judge of such a question after a few months only of the residence of these men in strange surroundings and under limitations that are likely to be relaxed in practice. That is not a sufficient criterion to enable us to judge of what may be a difficulty when this large number of men have been residents for a long time, say two years, and have been mixing with other people, for, as the Blue-book shows, they will probably be allowed after a time to have larger liberty of exit from the boundaries within which they are restrained, and, therefore, probably to mix with the native races and other people. I am not competent, and still less am I desirous, to prophesy that evil will follow; but those who have had experience of Chinese labourers elsewhere and are able to judge on the spot about present possibilities should look more closely than the Blue-book shows they have looked into such a question if we are to hope that a right judgment may be formed.

When the question of Chinese immigration was discussed half a century ago this question was continually to the front. In the proceedings before the Commission of 1854 and in the correspondence with the Colonial Office of that day, the problem was dwelt upon, and the opinion of the Colonial Office then was that it deserved the closest and most careful attention. It may be that the Colonial Government or the Colonial Office at home have at this moment information that all necesssary or possible precautions are being taken and that apprehensions are comparatively groundless; but I should like to be assured that the matter has received the attention it deserves in connection with the subject as a whole. What has brought about the apparent change from the aspect in which the difficulty presented itself fifty years ago? Have the habits of the Chinese people altered, or can it be that we are less particular than we then were, less on the watch in safeguarding our fellow-subjects against an evil which can only be indirectly referred to? All I venture to say is that, while I regard the first two conditions upon which I have insisted as having been successfully carried out, and find no ground for dissatisfaction in the Blue-book, I do not find equal satisfaction in the absence of reference to that third condition which I have mentioned. I have tried to look at the whole subject honestly, and to arrive at an independent and unbiassed opinion about it. It is certainly beset with the greatest difficulties, and, for my part, while I am far from being happy or satisfied at such a thing being done at all, it is my special wish that upon the moral aspect of this life of the Chinese in the compounds we should have fuller information than the House at present possesses.

*THE EARL OF MINTO: My Lords, I have been so long absent from this country that I feel very diffident in addressing your Lordships, but, as my noble friend Lord Carrington in his allusions to colonial legislation turned to me, I hope I may be allowed to make a few remarks, for I cannot entirely agree with the complexion which he put upon that legislation. During the term of my office in Canada I saw a good deal of legislation levelled against not only Chinese but

Japanese immigration, but that legislation was entirely provincial. It was legislation inaugurated by the Parliament of British Columbia, and it was invariably disallowed by the Dominion Parliament. It was not only directed against immigration, but dealt also with employment in certain trades in British Columbia not only of Chinese but Japanese, and it was objected to by the Dominion Government chiefly on the ground that it was anti-Imperial. I may tell your Lordships that this strong feeling against the immigration of Chinese and Japanese in British Columbia is very much mixed up with labour interests and utilised for political purposes. The result of all this legislation was that a Royal Commission was appointed, I think in 1900, and it reported in 1902 against both Chinese and Japanese immigration, but the only result was that the Dominion Parliament still refused to pass the British Columbian Acts, though they did agree ultimately to raise the poll-tax for each Chinaman from 100 dollars to 500 dollars. In dealing with this question I do not think it is fair to draw comparisons between British Columbia in its present state and the Transvaal; if you want to make a fair comparison you must go back to the early days of British Columbia before its resources were developed. Those resources were developed very largely by means of Chinese labour. The Canadian Pacific Railway, the making of which really brought British Columbia into confederation, was built very largely by Chinese labourers. There were something like 7,000 employed on the line, and they were a well-behaved, respectable body of men. All the resources in British Columbia at that time were developed to a great extent by the same means, because white labour did not exist. We all wish to employ white labour if we can get it, and at the present moment white labour in British Columbia may be more available than it was, but we must not forget that British Columbia rose to its present prosperous position very largely through the employment of Chinese labour. We must all recognise that there are periods in the early history of colonial dependencies when white labour is not obtainable, and I ask your Lordships, are we to sit down and see these resources remain undeveloped through some theoretical idea that we must not employ other than white labour?

LORD STANMORE: My Lords, I do not wish the debate to close without saying a few words on this subject. I cannot agree with the noble Duke the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies that this is a subject which has been already completely thrashed out. I think it is a very important one, and one which still affords great possibilities of discussion; and my reason for rising is to bring before the House some considerations to which I think the attention of your Lordships has not been drawn. It is not so much the interests of the Chinese labourers that I wish to refer to. We all desire that they should be fairly treated, but that is not the sole or the principal object which we have in view. You can do nothing in this matter without its having a great effect upon the whole system of indentured immigration throughout all our Colonies. There will be throughout them all a movement for the relaxation of those regulations which are now in force in regard to the employment of labourers, if some additional restriction is not added to those which exist in the Transvaal.

There is another and more important reason why I desire to see this subject well ventilated in Parliament and in the country; I refer to the effect this system will have on the white population of the colonies where these immigrants are employed by the encouragement it will give to the pernicious views which are only too prevalent at present in those colonies with regard to the manner in which the different races living in them are to be considered. Indentured immigration has been of vast benefit both to the colonies in which the labourers have been introduced and to the labourers themselves. I have seen it abundantly illustrated. I have seen the coolies who came in misery and poverty from India develop into self-respecting householders and cultivators, and become prosperous in the land; and I have seen also how the colonies into which they have been introduced have been benefited by their introduction, how cultivation has gone on where cultivation did not exist before, and how what were practically deserts have blossomed into gardens under their agency. But it has always been and always will be a difficult and dangerous task. It is a system which requires the most careful watching and the most careful regulation. Without those regulations and without that care it is a serious danger to the community. Such a danger must always exist where you have a wholly artificial state of society founded upon exceptional laws.

The late Lord Elgin was no sentimentalist. The younger Members of the House, such as the noble Duke the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, do not remember him, but there are many older Peers who will recollect that he was a man of great ability and sagacity, and of rather a cynical than a sentimental turn of mind. This is what he wrote in a letter on this subject—

> "It is a terrible business this living among inferior races. I have seldom from man or woman since I came to the East heard a sentence which was reconcilable with the hypothesis that Christianity had ever come into the world. Detestation, contempt, ferocity, these are the feelings with which Chinese and Indians alike are regarded. We do not treat them as dogs, because in that case we would whistle to them and pet them, but as machines with which we can have no communion or sympathy."

That is very much like the machines that my noble friend the noble Duke spoke of, and this testimony raises one of the greatest dangers in our dealings with this subject—the danger to the whites themselves of the encouragement of race hatred, and this is a point which I think it is important for us to consider.

As to the three conditions referred to by the most rev. Primate, I think he has completely established the first. As far as the regulations go, I see nothing of unfairness in the way in which the coolies are recruited. There will be some unfairness—there always is—behind the scenes, but you cannot prevent that. As regards his second condition, I believe the physical treatment of the Chinese in the Transvaal is good, but physical treatment is not all. When I read the description given of the compounds, of how the men are well fed, well housed, and well taken care of, I seemed to be reading some of the accounts of my old Inspector-General of Prisons in Ceylon. There, too, we took very good care to shut up people in compounds, where they were very well fed, very well housed, very well doctored, very well looked after, and very often much better off than out of prison, but they were in prison. I maintain that this compound system is the great blot on the African system of Chinese immigration. You have no right to shut up men in what are virtually prisons. It is a mistake to think that these regulations apply to coolies elsewhere. The noble Marquess the Leader of this House dwelt last year on the similarity of the laws that existed in this respect, but he was quite mistaken. He quoted as an argument that the coolies in Trinidad were compelled to reside on the estates. It is true that in a quite recent Act—passed in 1899—that obligation of residence was for the first time put into the law. But what is meant by residence? The noble Marquess thought it meant that they were confined to the estate and were punished if they left it. The noble Marquess, of course, cannot himself know much about colonial affairs; he is taken up with the important questions connected with his Department and probably only speaks on colonial matters on information supplied to him. A certain clause was given to the noble Marquess which he quoted to the House, but those who furnished him with that clause quite forgot to give him also Clause 137, which follows it, and which is to this effect, that it is punishable for any man to—

> "Absent himself without leave from the plantation in such manner or for such a time as to constitute a breach of the obligation of residence."

Nothing like the imprisonment in the compounds which obtains in South Africa obtains in any other colony. The immigration of women is imperative in other colonies importing indentured labourers. If the same laws with regard to Chinese immigrants prevailed in South Africa as are enforced in other colonies the Chinese would not be counted by thousands, or by hundreds, or even by scores. If the same proportion of women to men was enforced there as is enforced in other colonies the number of Chinamen would be only six. Those who say that the conditions are the same in South

Africa as in other colonies may take that fact to heart and make the best they can of it. It must have a bad effect on the white community to be encouraged to look down on immigrants as prisoners.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: My Lords, even at this late hour I hope I may be permitted very briefly to say how this matter presents itself to plain and serious English people outside the Parliamentary circle. The noble and learned Lord at the beginning of his speech spoke of the Chinese Ordinance as a new departure. It is not because it is a new departure that we object to it, but because it is, in fact, a reversion to a lower type of legislation and represents a policy which we had hoped had been entirely discarded. English people have feelings of repulsion in regarding this Ordinance because of the taint of serfdom in it.

The Questions of the noble and learned Lord were somewhat comprehensive. They dealt with the recruiting of the Chinese labourers, with their treatment in South Africa, and with the declarations of His Majesty's Ministers on the subject. One cannot but observe to what an extent on this side of the House the discussion has been confined to the treatment of the natives. With regard to the question of recruiting, the well-known Chinese missionary, the Rev. Arnold Foster, has described the advertisements for these labourers in Northern China as absolutely misleading. Those advertisements are said to omit no favourable condition among the terms of the Ordinance except one, and that one is the condition that the Chinaman may take his wife to South Africa with him, while they hardly refer at all to those conditions which have in them the element of slavery. One would like to know whether that series of advertisements is still being circulated in Northern China—whether these roseate and misleading announcements are still the first thing the Chinese emigrants to South Africa are allowed to see. I agree that, on the whole, the treatment of the Chinese in the compounds is favourable. The mineowners are wise and shrewd men; they are, no doubt, also influenced by humane views, and therefore it is not surprising that they should treat their labourers well. Still, I have read, within the last day or two, statements in the Press of coolies having been tied up by the pigtail so that their toes only touched the ground, and so many cuts of the cane administered to them by order of the compound manager. One cannot but ask who gives this authority? This statement may not have been seen by many of your Lordships; it appeared in the *Daily News*, which, if not universally read, is read by an immense number of serious, middle-class English people. The statement was written to Mr. R. L. Brathwaite by a member of the Witwatersrand Trade and Labour Council and if it is mistaken it ought to be contradicted.

But it is not merely of the Chinese that most of us are thinking. I am thinking also of the reputation of Englishmen, because this policy is a step backward, and has placed an offensive yellow blotch upon the escutcheon of our Empire of freedom. Moreover, putting aside the moral aspect of the question, and regarding it from the economical point of view, this system of indentured Chinese labour in the Transvaal is nothing more nor less than a triumph of capitalism. It is obvious to any impartial reader that the Transvaal is not governed by His Majesty's Government at home, or by the High Commissioner, but by a group of capitalists, who have stated in the frankest terms that they do not wish the Rand to become a white man's country. Their policy is that it should not be a country with its thousands of white men like Durham or Lancashire, everyone with a vote, but that the government of the country should be in the hands of a group of capitalists working servile labour. I need not remind your Lordships of the very plain statements that have been made by chairmen of companies on this subject when they have met their shareholders, and I need not remind you of the statement made by Lord Milner, in which he said the Rand did not want a white proletariat. When this country sent its sons to fight in the late war they expected that they were fighting for something very different from this. However much we might have objected to the war, we had hoped the result might be that we should see a colony of British citizens growing up and expanding, and we might have seen the beginning of this but for this policy. The noble and learned Lord has reminded us that but for the invasion of yellow labour we might fairly have anticipated the development of mining by the employment of an ever-increasing number of white men, so that we should have had our fellow-countrymen going from Cornwall and other parts and settling with their families in what would have become a prosperous and happy colony of the English self-governing type. Now it is beyond all question that the Rand is a place governed by a few millionaire capitalists, with its mines exploited by alien serfs. That is why the English people are, I believe, strongly opposed to that policy and will continue so in spite of any political blandishments.

One word, my Lords, with reference to the declarations of His Majesty's Ministers. We have nothing to complain of in the declaration of the noble Duke, but as I read the surprising speech made by the Prime Minister the other day in the Albert Hall, I felt that its unblushing cynicism called for a protest from all of us who have been opposed to this Ordinance. There we had the Prime Minister of England addressing a company of Primrose League ladies and saying to them that this Chinese advance has been opposed and assailed, not only by misrepresentation, but by mendacious misrepresentation. That is a very strong thing for a Prime Minister to say, and I think he ought to be more explicit when he indulges in such language. I have no doubt there may have been misrepresentation in this and other forms of South African affairs, but I am sure, if that is so, that the misrepresentation has not been all on our side. The Prime Minister went on to appeal to the Primrose League ladies to defend the Government, religion, and the Chinese Ordinance, and I noticed he was standing strange to say, all the time, under the motto, *Imperium et libertas.* I do not think I ever read anything more glaringly cynical or which I felt more seriously demanded a protest from those who have been conscientiously opposed to this Ordinance and its consequences, and I sincerely hope that those ladies will not allow themselves to be turned into missionaries of this Chinese Ordinance. My Lords, we see various sorts of missionaries now-a-days, but I hope I may never see respectable British matrons going about in our constituencies as missionaries in support of this invasion of Chinese serfdom. I am convinced that nothing can come of this Ordinance, morally or politically, but evil consequences to the Empire, which we must always regret, even if we can think of them without shame.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the arguments which are used in these not infrequent debates on Chinese labour in the Transvaal are so familiar that I hesitate to travel again over the ground which has been covered by the speeches this evening. But the noble Lord opposite, Lord Carrington, made so impassioned an appeal to me that I feel myself obliged to offer him some kind of response. I am afraid the noble Earl greatly exaggerates the effect of any words that are likely to fall from me upon an occasion of this sort; but as he desires my humble opinion on the subject, I am willing to satisfy him. I am one of those who have always regarded the experiment which is being tried in the Transvaal as a very serious experiment, and one which requires close and attentive watching. We made the experiment not light-heartedly or without deep consideration; we made it because we were convinced that something of the kind was absolutely necessary in the interest of the colony.

Some of the old fallacies in connection with this subject, which have been from time to time controverted, die very hard, as we see from the debate this evening. It has been said by more than one speaker —it was certainly said by the mover of the Motion—that His Majesty's Government, or the mine-owners had by some means or another created an artificial scarcity of labour in South Africa with the object of facilitating the introduction of Chinese coolies. Was ever a statement wider of the mark than that? What are the facts? The complete collapse of the mining industry was imminent. White labour was unobtainable; Some of the mineowners had tried to obtain it, and failed egregiously. Efforts were then made to obtain labour in other parts of the world. I remember that an effort was made to obtain a certain number of coolies from one of the African protectorates, but it had to be given up in despair. Kaffir labour was not forthcoming in sufficient numbers; and it was because the collapse was imminent, and because the mining industry would have gone under, that we, not without hesitation as I have said, authorised the introduction of Chinese labour. If the mining industry had gone under it would have carried with it most of the other industries in that part of Africa.

What I always regret is that this question cannot be discussed without the exhibition of what I can only describe as a considerable amount of class prejudice. During the course of the discussion this evening we have been constantly told that all this has been done for the sake of the capitalist class, who, because they are described as millionaires, seem to be regarded as wholly unworthy of any support or recognition. I want to know why the mineowners of South Africa are to be singled out for special attack in this manner. It is suggested that they are unworthy of our consideration because the wealth which is produced in the mines leaves the country; but do noble Lords who use that argument suppose that the existence of these mines does not lead to other industries and other forms of employment of labour which create wealth—a wealth which does remain in the country and benefits those who dwell in it? Do noble Lords suppose that if, for example, the mines were to be suddenly closed, that would not affect the prosperity of the whole of South Africa, and the welfare of other trades besides the mining trade? There is another kind of class prejudice which I am sorry to say is also manifested on these occasions; I think we have some right to complain of the manner in which the Chinese coolies themselves are very often referred to. The noble Lord opposite, Lord Carrington, on every occasion when he mentioned the word coolie coupled it with the epithet "low-class"; and during the course of his speech he indicated not obscurely that that class was distinguished by forms of immorality which he did not more particularly describe.

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

The same point was dealt with, though I must say in a very different spirit and tone, by the most rev. Primate, who, I think very naturally, asked us whether we were able to give an assurance as to the manner in which the question of the morality of the coolies had been dealt with. Well, I have to say that that aspect of the case has not been and will not be lost sight of; and I am able to tell the most rev. Primate that up to the present time among this great body of coolies there has only been one criminal assault of the kind at which his argument pointed; and, when I say that, I ask your Lordships to remember that these compounds are always open, that they may be visited freely, and are visited, and that there are consequently ample opportunities for ascertaining whether the kind of immorality which is particularly apprehended really prevails within them or not.

What we say is that this experiment has produced the results which we hoped from it, in so far as it has saved the mining industry from impending ruin; and we say, on the other hand, that it has not produced the sinister results which were so freely predicted from it by noble Lords opposite. That part of the case was so fully dealt with by my noble friend who represents the Colonial Office that I will not enter into it in any detail; but I ask your Lordships to remember that a year ago the conditions under which these coolies were employed were constantly described to us as conditions indistinguishable from those of slavery—a charge which has been completely disposed of by the statements contained in the Blue-book. In the same way we were told that fraudulent enlistment was sure to prevail. I was glad to hear from the most rev. Primate to-night a frank admission that in his opinion that part of the case had broken down. Then there is the question of the health of the coolies. Your Lordships will find in this Blue-book detailed reports from responsible officials, showing that the surroundings under which these men live and do their work are surroundings of a satisfactory character, and that the general state of their health is not bad at present and is tending to improve.

Something was said this evening on the subject of the riots, which are described very fully in the Blue-book. But the loss of life from those riots does not appear to have been considerable; and it is stated, and I must say stated in a manner which carries great conviction to one's mind, that these riots were largely due to the fact that the first batches of Chinamen who arrived in the country were completely strange to it, were easily alarmed, and got out of hand. It is confidently predicted by those best able to judge that now that the newcomers find friends and fellow-countrymen on the spot, and are able to learn from them what their actual position in the mines is likely to be, such riots and disturbances will become much less frequent.

In regard to the question of the absence of wives, the most rev. Primate has, I think, been somewhat misled, because he has not realised or had it explained to him that Chinese coolies, as a rule, do not take their wives with them. I was under no delusion upon this point, and I remember that I stated in the House, on high authority, that the Chinaman when he leaves his country for a short time to go and work in another country scarcely ever takes his wife with him. Do noble Lords opposite believe that in other parts of the world, where large bodies of labourers are gathered together, they do not leave their wives or families behind? I have seen something of railway construction in other parts of the world, where large gangs of men have been employed together, and I do not think it was ever the case that in their camps—which probably were not at all fit places for women—their wives and families were to be found. It appears that out of the total number of men now in South Africa, about 4,000 have registered their intention of bringing their wives out, but whether they will do so seems to me somewhat problematic. Another anticipation which has been completely falsified is the anticipation that the employment of these Chinese workmen would have the effect of limiting the employment of white labourers. We now know that a large number of white men are being employed who certainly would not be employed if the Chinese coolies were not there to keep the mines going. The fact is that, as Lord Milner explains in one of the despatches contained in the Blue-book, the white labourers do not resent the presence of the Chinese, but, on the contrary, know perfectly well that the addition of a large number of Chinamen to the ranks of labour in South Africa means a corresponding addition to the number of white men employed.

All these gloomy anticipations have certainly not been fulfilled; and I should have thought it would have been more natural for those who indulged in them to confess frankly that they had been mistaken in many particulars, to continue their watchfulness, which might be usefully exercised, but at the same time to concede to us that many of the disastrous results to which they looked forward have by no means taken place. I am sorry to say that instead of that we are treated to a constant reproduction of the same old charges which have been made and met on so many occasions. As for us, we shall continue the experiment, we shall continue it under proper precautions and with due watchfulness. And before I sit down I should like, as prophecies are the fashion, to indulge in a little prophecy of my own—and that is that, if the fortunes of war should permit noble Lords opposite to occupy our places on these benches, they too will continue the experiment and do exactly what we have been doing.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I do not know that I should have been tempted to take any part in this debate at this hour of the evening had it not been for what, to my mind, is the distinguishing feature of this debate, and that is the fact that His Majesty's Government appear to be quite unconscious of the grave importance which attaches to the question of the lack of Chinese women with the coolies, which has been referred to by the most rev. Primate. It was certainly a very singular thing that the noble Duke, answering not only what my noble and learned friend said, but a great many things which he never said, should have entirely omitted the smallest allusion to this question of the supply of women. I do not make any charge against the noble Duke in that respect. I have no doubt he entirely forgot it. I do not doubt that if he had remembered it he would have said something about it, but I do think it is a singular fact that the Under-Secretary should forget what seems to many of us one of the most important features of this case, and that there should be, as the most rev. Primate has stated, no allusion to the subject in the Blue-book. There is no apparent consciousness on the part of those who prepared the Blue-book in South Africa, that the subject was of any importance at all.

The noble Duke said that our prophecies had been very unfortunate and wholly disproved, but there is, at all events, one prophecy that has not been disproved, and that is the statement which we persistently made that you would not get any considerable quantity of women to accompany the coolies who were taken from China to South Africa. That has been exactly the case. Some 4,000 or 5,000, out of between 35,000 and 40,000 who have gone to South Africa, have registered their names in order to bring out their wives; and as a matter of fact I believe there are only two Chinese women and a few children at the present moment with them. That that should be the state of things does not in the smallest degree surprise me. It is what I always anticipated would be the result. I quite admit that Mr. Lyttelton removed those provisions of the original draft Ordinance which tended absolutely to prevent women accompanying the coolies at all, but I never supposed that that would have the effect of bringing over a large number of women, not so much on the ground pointed out by the most rev. Primate that Chinese coolies when they went out to labour were not in the habit of taking their women, but because I felt that those engaged in recruiting were quite certain, after the Ordinance had been altered, to enlist very few married men or men who were inclined to take their wives out to South Africa. We all know what sort of persons these recruiters are; they would naturally look to what they would suppose to be the principal interest of their employer, and it was idle to imagine that any number of women would really accompany these coolies. Therefore we have precisely that grave state of things which was contemplated and discussed last year.

You have between 35,000 and 40,000 Chinese coolies in South Africa. We are told in this Blue-book that the number will soon rise to 55,000, and yet the proportion of women even registered is only 4,000. That, I think, is the most complete proof of the justice of our contention last year that this very grave state of things ought never to have been allowed to be created because of the grave moral questions involved. As your Lordships know, we on this side of the House have never admitted that there was a necessity for the introduction of Chinese labourers. I believed, and I think it is clear now, that the necessary labour might have been obtained at a price in South Africa. But it is a question of cheap labour, not of labour alone, and we hold that, in order to procure this cheap labour for the mineowners, His Majesty's Government were not justified in incurring the great and grave moral risks which they are proved to have incurred by the adoption of this policy.

My noble friend who has just sat down said that the mines were threatened with ruin. I have in my hand a statement not altogether consistent with that notion. It is a statement made, not in 1904, but in 1903, and I am quite aware that anybody now-a-days quoting the opinion of anybody else expressed a year ago is considered to be guilty of a very unjust and highly improper proceeding. But I am rather old-fashioned, and believe in political consistency. This is what Lord Milner said on June 2nd, 1903, at which time he was not, I believe, an advocate of the introduction of Chinese labour—

> "To listen to the extreme advocates of Asiatic labour you would think the country was on the verge of ruin. What was fabulous wealth seven years ago cannot be abject poverty now. Not only that, but the rate of production is steadily increasing."

And on May 31st of that year he said—

> "It does not strike me that our financial troubles, over which so many crocodile tears have been shed, are anything out of the common: the Transvaal is paying its way."

Lord Milner subsequently took a different view of the case, but at the same time he ought to have known something of the prospects of the Transvaal in May, 1903, and his sudden conversion to the introduction of Chinese labour and the statements made in regard to it, that the colony was on the verge of ruin, do not, I confess, commend themselves to me as very certain proofs of the real state of things. We know the pressure that was brought to bear. We know the circumstances that probably led to the change of Lord Milner's opinion, but we still hold that labour might have been obtained at a price, and I think you will find the proof of that in the Blue-book itself. Your Lordships will observe that in the month of June, 1903, there was a sudden drop in the number of Kaffirs employed; they fell to 74,000, and in July and August to 73,000. That was just the time when the controversy with reference to Chinese labour was at its height; but by December of that year the number of Kaffirs employed had risen to 83,000. I do not believe, therefore, that it would have been impossible to get Kaffir labour if the mineowners had been willing to pay for it.

My noble friend asked why this hard language was used in regard to the mineowners. He said they are persons conducting an industry in the Transvaal naturally anxious to promote their own interests, but why were all these hard things said of them? Those who own the mines are not mainly persons whose chief interest is the conduct of that industry. They are persons who are much more interested in what goes on on the Stock Exchange in London than in the mines in South Africa, and that is the reason why there is a greater suspicion in regard to their proceedings. They have less real concern in the true interest of the country than they would have if they were merely employed in the conduct of a straightforward industry on the spot. Both the noble Duke and the noble Marquess who has just sat down seemed to make some sort of complaint of my noble and learned friend's having brought forward this subject to-day. We have occasionally brought the subject forward because we attach great importance to it and entertain grave objections to the policy that has been pursued. I should have been sorry if we had lost the able speech with which my noble and learned friend opened this discussion to-night; and I must say it is going rather far to complain of my noble friend's bringing the subject forward for the first time in this session, after this experiment, as my noble friend the Foreign Minister called it—and I was delighted to hear him use the word "experiment"—has had six months trial——

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I took exception to some of the noble and learned Lord's arguments, but made no complaint whatever of his bringing the subject forward.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I beg the noble Marquess' pardon, but I am sure the noble Duke will not deny the soft impeachment, for he spoke about the frequency with which this question was discussed. To my mind the question is one of the highest importance, concerning as it does the reputation of this country. I am glad to think, however, that there is a possible opportunity of bringing the experiment to a close. Mr. Evans tells us that by the end of August or September there will be 55,000 Chinese coolies in the Transvaal, and that after that time they will not need to introduce any more except to supply the natural wastage. I therefore urge His Majesty's Government, if they really were, as the noble Marquess has said, reluctant to enter upon this mischievous experiment, to take the opportunity of bringing that experiment to a close as soon as, at all events, they can say that the immediate danger which they anticipated, but the existence of which I and my friends always doubted, has passed away. The noble Lord treated lightly the question of the ratio between the white and coloured men, but it is of the essence of the question. Until that point has been satisfactorily answered—and I do not think it can be—we shall continue to think that the Government have made a dangerous experiment, involving very serious questions, especially moral questions, and tending not to increase, but to reduce, the employment of British labour.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at five minutes past Eight o'clock, till Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 16*th May*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as DEPUTY-SPEAKER, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Highland Railway Bill; Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill; Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Cheltenham and Horsham (Rural)," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 222.]

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Southampton Incorporation," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 223.]

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the Wigan Corporation Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their Additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

3. "That, in the case of the Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their Additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

4. "That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways) Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First three Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill. Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Amendment to Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to remove doubts as to the validity of a certain Decree, dated twenty-second November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, of the High Court of Justice (Probate Divorce and Admiralty Division) dissolving the Marriage solemnised on the eleventh July, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-two, between John Richard Malone and Charlotte Mildred Malone, then Charlotte Mildred Yarde-Buller, Spinster, and to confirm the said Decree." [Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Charles George Gamble (formerly of No. 14, Rostrevor Terrace, Orwell Road, Rathgar, but now of Mount Jerome House, both in the county of Dublin, and of 39, Fleet Street, in the city of Dublin), Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Judicature, Ireland, with Ida Gertrude Gamble, his now wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other purposes." [Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Jane Sarah Victoria Lautour, of Ansty House, Erdington, in the county of Warwick, with Ernest Lautour, her husband, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes." Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the County Council of Middlesex to pay certain sums agreed to be paid by them to the Alexandra Park Trustees; and for other purposes." [Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords.]

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords]; Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Reigate, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Old Monkland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.

Petition from Paisley, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petition of Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Petition from Paisley, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION BILL.

Petition of Royal Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION (No. 2) BILL.

Petition of Royal Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Manchester; and West London; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SCOTLAND (TECHNICAL EDUCATION).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th June, 1904; *Mr. Graham Murray*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 165.]

UGANDA RAILWAY ACTS, 1896 AND 1902.

Account presented, showing the money issued from the Consolidated Fund under the provisions of the Uganda Railway Acts, 1896 (59 and 60 Vic., c. 38), and 1902 (2 Edw. 7, c. 40), and of the money expended and borrowed, and Securities created under the said Acts, to 31st March, 1904, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 166.]

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14) Warrant, 1905, dated 22nd March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Public Records (Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments). Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.

Address for "Return showing the number of Experiments performed on Living Animals during the year 1904, under licences granted under the Act, 39 and 40 Vic. 3. 77, distinguishing painless from painful experiments (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 183, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return ordered, "showing (1) the names of the Lay Assistant Commissioners acting as Purchase Inspectors under the Land Purchase Acts; (2) date of original Appointment; (3) date upon which Appointment expires; (4) age on Appointment; (5) residence at time of Appointment; (6) Locality in which practical experience of Land was acquired; (7) where Educated; (8) previous Occupation; (9) acreage of Land farmed; (10) whether held as Owner or Tenant; (11) what other experience in Agriculture; and (12) what experience in Valuing, Mapping, and Surveying; and like Particulars with reference to others than Lay Assistant Commissioners, if any, who have been appointed Inspectors under The Land Purchase Act, 1903."—(*Mr. Delany.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Discharges from Government Dockyards.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty the total number of workmen discharged from Portsmouth, Chatham, Devonport, Sheerness, and Pembroke Dockyards since June, 1903, for causes other than misconduct.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The total number of men discharged from the dockyards since June, 1903, for causes other than misconduct, are as follows:—

Portsmouth	1,842
Chatham	1,967
Devonport	2,492
Sheerness	679
Pembroke	252

These figures include men discharged at their own request and on superannuation, but not those entered for casual employment.

Estates purchased by the Congested Districts Board.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of estates or untenanted farms purchased by the Congested Districts Board in unscheduled districts since the Congested Districts Act of 1901 was passed; and the number of cases in which, in respect to such estates or untenanted farms, the Congested Districts Board requested the Lord-Lieutenant to exercise the power conferred upon him by the 3rd Section of said Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The number of estates and untenanted farms purchased is thirty-eight. The number referred to in the second inquiry is one. In the case of untenanted farms it is not necessary for the Board's purpose to put into force the powers of Section 3. This is only necessary in the case of tenants or tenant purchasers to whom the Board desire to give additional land for the enlargement of uneconomic holdings situated in non-congested districts.

Irish Mackerel Fisheries

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Irish Board of Agriculture has been called to the complaints made regarding the injury done to the mackerel fishing industry of Ireland by captures of immature mackerel by Scotch fishing boats engaged in the herring fishery at an early season of the year; and whether, in view of the fact that the Scotch Fisheries Board prohibit fishing for herrings in the Scotch fishing grounds before the middle of June, steps will be taken to protect the Irish fishing grounds from this destructive practice.

Mr. FLYNN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that injury is caused to the autumn mackerel fishing and fish curing industry in Ireland by the extensive capture of immature mackerel in herring fishing nets or seines at an early period of the fishing season, and that the haak fishing is threatened with destruction owing to the growth of this practice; and whether steps will be taken by the fishery inspectors of the Irish Board of Agriculture to prohibit all herring fishing in Irish waters before the first or second week in June.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) It is the fact that small mackerel have been captured in large quantities by the herring boats that fish from Kinsale during the month of May. This could only be prevented by stopping the spring herring fishing off the south coast during that month, the only month in which it can be profitably carried on. The entire question was investigated at public inquiries held at Kinsale and other places in 1892, with the result that no by-law could be framed that would satisfactorily meet its different aspects. The scientific adviser to the Fisheries Branch of the Department of Agriculture is of opinion that the capture of small mackerel by herring nets in serious quantity is sporadic rather than regular, that it is, in fact, an accident in a most important industry, and appears to have recurred through a great number of years, which commenced long before any failure of the mackerel fishery, spring or harvest, could be laid to its account. The Department are not aware that the Scotch Fishery Board prohibit herring fishing on the Scotch fishing grounds before the middle of June. At the inquiries above referred to, evidence was submitted as to the destruction of considerable numbers of small and unsaleable haak by the herring nets. This seems to be unavoidable, but it does not afford sufficient justification for prohibiting a profitable herring fishing in the month of May.

Anæsthetics Administered by Unregistered Dentists.

Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the death of a young woman at Carlisle, whilst having teeth extracted by an unregistered dentist; and whether, in view of the frequency of deaths from anæsthetics administered by unqualified dentists, he will consider the advisability of promoting legislation for the protection of the public.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have received a report of the facts of this case from the coroner, and I shall communicate them to the Privy Council Office for the Lord President's consideration. The propriety of the action of the unregistered dentist in this case may be considered open to question, but I do not think further proceedings are called for. It should be remembered that unregistered practitioners who undertake serious operations resulting in death may be prosecuted for manslaughter.

Sale of Poisons.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to an inquest at the City Coroner's Court, on the 25th April last, at which the jury unanimously expressed the opinion that it should be made compulsory for all poisons to be sold in bottles of standard shape, and easily distinguishable by touch; will he state whether he will introduce legislation this session; and, in view of the possibility of early legislation, will he seek the opinion of Metropolitan coroners on the subject

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The rider to the verdict of the jury in the case referred to was communicated to me by the coroner. I am sorry that I cannot add anything to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member on 13th March† respecting legislation. The matter is under the consideration of the Privy Council Office, who will have full information before them.

Case of James Nicholson at South-Western Police Court.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he has considered the case of James Nicholson, who was sentenced at the South-Western Police Court some ten days ago to fourteen days imprisonment for stealing a loaf of bread; whether he has been able to order his discharge; and, if so, on what date was the prisoner released.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have made inquiry of the magistrate who dealt with this case and find that it is true that the prisoner, whose age appears to be nineteen, and not seventeen, as stated in the Question, declared to the policeman who arrested him that he was hungry and that stealing was the only way in which he had been able to live. It appeared, however, that he was charged with an offence last month and allowed to go to a Salvation Army Home. That he left this place after a few days because, according to his own account, he did not like the people or the work, and that previously to this he had given up respectable employment that was open to him. I have also received a letter from the Police Court missionary, to whom the hon. Member referred in his previous Question, in which he points out that the newspaper report of the statement he made in this case is imperfect and inaccurate, and explains that the trouble he had taken about Nicholson on a previous occasion had been of no avail. In these circumstances I see no reason for advising any interference with the lenient sentence passed by the magistrate. I may add that the reports of Police Court cases which appear in the daily Press are necessarily brief, and, in my experience, are often extremely misleading.

The Underground Cable to the North.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what progress has been made with the underground telegraph cable to the North.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The cable is complete as far as Carlisle; the pipes are all laid between Carlisle and Glasgow; and the cable for these pipes has been ordered, and will be drawn in during the present year. The underground line from London to Glasgow will then be complete.

Holy Rood Roman Catholic Church, Swindon.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if Holy Rood Roman Catholic Church. Swindon, was, prior to 1903, certified for worship and the registration of marriages; and if, on the sale of this church in 1903, Holy Rood temporary church was similarly certified and the usual fees paid; if it is the case that a new church has now been completed on what is substantially the same site for the congregation of Holy Rood Church, Swindon, and that the Registrar-General has thereupon decided that a fresh certification of the church is necessary for the purposes of worship and to licensing of marriages; and what are the reasons for this decision; and what is the total amount in fees which will have been paid in respect of the original church, the temporary church, and the new church of the Holy Rood, Swindon.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have communicated with the Registrar-General on this subject, and I understand that the circumstances are as stated in the Question. The Registrar-General informs me "that his decision is based on the fact that, although the new Holy Rood Church is built on the same property as the temporary church, there is no internal communication between them. The two churches cannot, therefore, be held to be one and the same building, the only ground on which the statutory fees could be remitted. This ruling is in accordance with Section 19 of 6 and 7 William 4, c. 85, and with precedent, and it is necessary, therefore, that the new church should be certified for worship and registered for marriages, if it is desired that marriages should be legally celebrated therein. The fees that have been paid and are payable are—

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 1204.

	£	s.	d.
Original church . .	3	2	6
Temporary church .	3	2	6
New church . .	3	2	6."

Cutting down of Standing Timber in Ireland.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the action taken by various county councils and other representative public bodies in Ireland in the direction of reafforestation, and the feeling in Ireland on the subject, measures will be adopted for the purpose of preventing Irish landlords from cutting down the standing timber on their properties when selling to their tenants under the Land Purchase Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Land Commissioners have no jurisdiction such as is suggested, nor are they aware that timber has been cut down by landlords in anticipation of sales. In the case of tenant-purchasers, however, the Commissioners possess the ordinary legal rights of mortgagees to restrain the purchasers from committing waste of the nature indicated, and thereby depreciating the security.

King-Harman and Sandford Estates.

Mr. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners can state the number of cases on the King-Harman Estate and Sandford Estate respectively in which they have approached or negotiated with tenants in possession of grazing lands or non-residential holdings for the sale to them of the tenant's interest in same for the purpose of the division of these lands amongst the holders of uneconomic holdings; in how many cases have these negotiations been successful; and on what terms is the money proposed to be repaid which is advanced for the purchase of the tenants' interests.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) In five cases on the estate of E. C. King-Harman, the Estates Commissioners have intimated that if the vendor should buy up the tenants' interest and offer the holdings to them as untenanted land, they will be prepared to consider favourably the question of their purchase for the purpose of the enlargement of smaller holdings on this estate. The advances will be made for the purchase of the fee simple of the lands as untenanted.

Punishment of Chinese Coolies in the Transvaal.

Mr. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that in some of the compounds in South Africa Chinese who refuse to go down the mines unless paid 2s. per day are tied up to a pole by their pigtails in such a way that their toes only just touch the ground, and are then thrashed; and will he give instructions for an immediate discontinuance of such punishment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) No, Sir; I am not aware of this.

Royal Army Medical Corps—Reserve of Civilian Surgeons.

Dr. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is his intention to form a reserve of civilian surgeons in connection with the Royal Army Medical Corps, in view of the experiences gained in the South African War.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The subject is receiving consideration.

Reorganisation of the Auxiliary Forces.

DR. THOMPSON: To ask the Secretary of State for War if there is any intention of carrying out in the near future the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission appointed to consider the reorganisation of the Auxiliary Forces.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) I have every hope that it may be possible to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission in the direction of improving the organisation of the Auxiliary Forces. But for reasons which I have frequently pointed out in debate, these changes cannot be made on a large scale at once. Most of the recommendations involve the expenditure of money which is not at present available for this purpose.

Government Stores.

MR. LEVY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that it is impossible to ascertain who supplied a large portion of the stores destroyed in South Africa, he will consider the advisability of issuing instructions that all stores supplied to the War Office should bear a distinctive mark, in order that the contractors of all stores may be identified when necessary.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Under existing instructions, stores supplied to the War Office are required, as far as possible, in the case of those which are capable of being stamped or branded, to bear the distinctive mark of the contractor concerned. It must be remembered that there are some stores which do not readily admit of being so stamped or branded.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Elder, Dempster Contract.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the contract of April 19th, 1900, between the Crown Agents and Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co., has been fulfilled in respect of Clauses 2 and 3 thereof; and, if not, have any steps been taken to bring about the full services contracted for.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and eamington): The contract has been fulfilled in regard to all the provisions of Clauses 2 and 3, except in so far as two of the steamers now on the line have at times failed to show themselves capable of maintaining the speed required by Clause 3 (b). This matter has formed the subject of correspondence and negotiations between the Jamaica Government, the contractor, and myself, with a view to securing satisfactory fulfilment of the intention of the contract.

Motor-Cyclist's Accident at Petersfield.

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the recent accident near Petersfield, in which a naval officer riding a motor-bicycle was knocked down by a cart, which was immediately driven away by the man in charge, while the officer lay stunned and wounded on the ground; whether any steps have been taken to ascertain the identity of the cart.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Yes, Sir; and I have obtained a report upon the case from the Hampshire police. I find that the identity of the driver and of the cart has been ascertained, and that inquiries are being made by the police with a view to proceedings being taken against the driver for an offence under the Highway Act.

Post Office Counter Duties.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will make inquiry into the system existing at many provincial head post offices whereby junior and unestablished officers are placed on counter duties in positions involving monetary responsibility; and whether, in view of the fact that all losses have to be made good, the staff shall have adequate opportunities for learning the work before being entrusted with the responsibility, and that only officers of experience shall in future be entrusted with counter duties.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): If the hon. Member will furnish me with some concrete instances of the system to which he refers I will make inquiries; but I may say that it is the general practice to assign important counter duties, involving considerable monetary responsibility, to the more experienced officers as far as possible.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: When I give the noble Lord information in a concrete case he answers me in the abstract.

Overseerships in Provincial Head Offices.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when it is intended to issue the scheme dealing with the increase of overseerships, and whether promotions will date from April 1st, 1905; whether the claims of members of the staff in provincial head offices, who have performed supervising duties of three or four months duration annually for several years, will be considered; and whether, in connection with the proposed scheme and promotions, it is intended to take into account the fact that at many offices ordinary members of the staff are in full charge of the business during the despatch of important mails.

Lord STANLEY: The examination of the duties at the various offices is not yet quite completed. The resulting promotions will take effect from the date of my approval, and I am not prepared to date them from April 1st. Due consideration will be given to duties involving supervision.

Motor-Car Speeds.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state the names of the local authorities who have applied for power to limit the speed of motor-cars within their area to ten miles an hour, and have had their application refused; whether in each case the application has been successfully opposed by the Automobile Club, the Motor Union, or other motorist clubs; and whether, in view of the many recent accidents caused by motor-cars driving at a high speed through populous places, he will look more favourably upon the application of local authorities to limit the speed of motor-cars to ten miles an hour in those places.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): The names of the local authorities who have made applications of the kind referred to which have not been complied with are—The Common Council of the City of London, and the town councils of Beverley, Bury, Dover, Kingston-on-Thames, Leeds, Leigh, Newport (Monmouthshire), Todmorden, Winchester, and Whitehaven. The application was in each case opposed by an organisation such as is mentioned in the Question, there was a local inquiry at which both sides were heard, and the inspector reported the evidence to the Local Government Board together with the result of his own observation. As regards the last part of the Question, I can assure the hon. Member that I will give unprejudiced consideration to any application that may be made to me for the imposition of a speed limit in populous places.

Private Burial Grounds in Monastic and Conventual Institutions.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the number of private burial grounds that exist in connection with monastic and conventual institutions in the United Kingdom; does he from time to time give his sanction for these private burial grounds; and, if so, how many have been sanctioned within the past five years.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. The jurisdiction of the Local Government Board under the Burial Acts only extends to England and Wales, and their approval of the opening of a new burial ground is required where the ground is in the Metropolis as defined by the Burial Act, 1852, or within two miles of any part of it, or where there is in force an Order on Council which for the protection of the public health renders such approval necessary. Since the transfer to the Board on January 1st, 1901, of the jurisdiction which the Secretary of State previously exercised in this matter, their approval has been given to the opening of five new burial grounds in connection with monastic and conventual institutions.

Gwydyr House.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether, in view of the increased office accommodation shortly at the disposal of the Government, and with a view to preserving a valuable open space, he will consider the possibility of removing the recently erected one-storey extension of Gwydyr House.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The First Commissioner regrets that he is unable to give any assurance in this matter before the completion of the Government buildings now in course of construction.

Scottish Herring Fisheries.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can state the period of the year prior to which the Scotch Fishery Board prohibits fishing for herrings in the Scotch fishing grounds.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): No prohibition of herring fishing by the authority of the Fishery Board exists in Scotland, but for local statutory regulations I may refer the hon. Member to 52 and 53 Vict. cap. 23, Section 5, which relates to that section of the coast extending from Ardnamurchan Point to the Mull of Galloway.

Scottish Board of Manufactures.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate what steps have been taken by the Secretary for Scotland, or are going to be taken, to carry out the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Board of Manufactures of two years ago.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: The Secretary for Scotland has recently discussed the situation with representatives of the Town Council of Edinburgh and various bodies interested, and has the whole subject under his immediate consideration. He hopes shortly to be in a position to make an announcement on the subject.

Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891—Refund of Postage.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if, in view of the fact that postage to the local officers under the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, must be prepaid and registered, and that the local officers obtain a refund for postage and registration of their replies, will he say why the public have not the same facilities.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Local registrars of titles are refunded the cost of postages officially incurred by them because they are public officials. I am not aware of any reason why the public should have the same facilities; but the matter is one for the Postmaster-General.

Trinity College Commission Report.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state when the Report of the Trinity College Commission will be issued; and whether it will be laid upon the Table of the House as a Parliamentary Paper.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): As already stated, I have received, and am considering, this Report, which will be laid on the Table in the course of the present week.

MR. FLAVIN: The Attorney-General promised it should be published last March, and you promised it for the middle of April, yet we have not got it yet!

MR. WALTER LONG: I do not remember any such promise on my part.

Flax Culture in Ireland.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how much money has been spent in trying to improve flax culture in Ireland since the Government commenced to make special loans and grants with that object; and whether he will lay Reports showing what success has attended these efforts.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Since 1900 the net expenditure of the Department of Agriculture in this matter has been £8,490. The results of the experiments are detailed in the Department's Annual Reports and Quarterly Journals.

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, since it appears that a number of Catholic gentlemen in the veterinary branch of the Irish Agricultural Department are restricted to practically stationary salaries of £95 a year, while increases of salary have been granted to certain other officials, he will state what steps he proposes taking in order to secure that any economy effected in the remuneration of the Catholic officials shall not be availed of to increase further the salaries of higher paid officials.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This Question repeats an insinuation which, as has been repeatedly pointed out, is entirely unjustifiable. I have nothing to add to the replies already given, except to say that the officials in the veterinary branch are on the scale of salary fixed for the grade to which they belong, and that their salaries are not stationary.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that some of these clerks will not reach their maximum for twenty-five years?

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to granting an inquiry into the alleged grievances of these clerks?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I see no reason why an inquiry should be granted.

Warden Estate, Sneem.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that none of the evicted tenants have as yet been reinstated on the Warden Estate at Sneem; can he state the reason of the delay; and can he say whether any negotiations have been opened with the Estates Commissioners for the purchase of the remaining portions of the estate.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have no information as to the first part of the Question; no responsibility for any delay in the reinstatement of the evicted tenants can rest, however, with the landlord. The estate, which is a large and complicated one, is being dealt with by the Commissioners, but some time must elapse, I understand, before the sale can be completed.

Irish Education—Mr. Downing's Report.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. E. Downing, late chief inspector under the Irish Board of National Education, made any report on the state of education in Ireland since that published in the Appendix to the 68th Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the year 1901; if so, why his report is not published in the Appendix to the 69th Report or in the Appendix to the 70th Report recently issued; will he cause such a report to be laid on the Table of the House; and whether, if Mr. Downing's report was not presented to the Board as customary, he can state why the usual course was dispensed with on this occasion.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; both of the chief inspectors, Messrs. Downing and Purser, made general reports for 1902 which were not published. These reports consisted largely of extracts taken from the reports of the senior inspectors, and the Commissioners decided that it was preferable to publish the latter reports in their entirety. This was accordingly done. Mr. Downing did not furnish any subsequent report. He has since retired from the service.

Cragg and Ardcrone Farms, County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Cragg and Ardcrone Farms, county Kerry, purchased by the Congested Districts Board over a year ago, are practically derelict and cannot be used for any suitable purpose by the Board owing to the circumstances under which they were purchased; and, if so, whether the Board would be prepared to reconsider the question of these farms with the view of effecting a reinstatement of the original tenants who were evicted from them.

MR. WALTER LONG: These lands have been fully stocked with cattle during the past year. As to the remainder of the Question I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to his previous Question of the 10th April.†

MR. MURPHY; Is it not the fact that the cattle are merely the property of the local graziers and farmers and that no practical use is being made of the farms?

MR. WALTER LONG: I do not know who are the owners.

King Harman Estate Bog Lands.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. John Drury, chairman of the Boyle United Irish League, has been appointed by the Estates Commissioners, at a salary, to distribute the bog lands on the King Harman Estate to the tenants.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am informed by the Commissioners that Mr. Drury has been provisionally appointed secretary to trustees in whom it is proposed to vest certain bogs on this estate. The appointment, however, is one for which the Commissioners are not in any way responsible, and no payment in respect of it will be made from moneys within the control of the Commissioners.

Corglass and Cornakelly Estate, Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Corglass and Cornakelly Estate of Mr. O'Brien is yet in a position to be offered for sale to the tenants; whether the negotiations which were on foot some months ago have been suspended or are proceeding; and when these tenants may expect to be vested.

MR. WALTER LONG: The difficulties experienced in completing the arrangements for the sale of this estate have now been surmounted, and active steps are being taken for its sale to the Estates Commissioners.

Intermediate Examinations in Ireland.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the reasons which induced the Commissioners of Intermediate Education in Ireland to abolish the preparatory grade in examinations under the Board; and also why it was that the age limit for the junior grade was increased.

MR. WALTER LONG: The preparatory grade has not been abolished, but the award of exhibitions in that grade has been discontinued for some years, for the reasons stated by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover in reply to a Question on June 20th,‡ 1901. The age limit for the pass examinations of the junior and higher grades was increased in order to enable students between sixteen and nineteen to qualify for certificates. The limit of age for candidates for exhibitions and prizes has not been increased.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Is this to be a permanent arrangement?

MR. WALTER LONG: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Irish Education—Rule 127 (b).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolutions passed at meetings of the four deaneries of the diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise; and whether the protest against Rule 127 (b) contained in these resolutions will receive attention.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 1028.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, xcv., 915.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Answer to both Questions is in the affirmative.

County Longford Magistracy.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the present appointment of Mr. Alexander W. Percival, of Minard, county Longford, as a justice of the peace for county Longford, and will he say on whose recommendation the lord-lieutenant of the county made this appointment; how many Catholic and Protestant magistrates have since April 1st, 1899, been appointed in county Longford; and whether, in view of the fact that ninety-one per cent. of the population of county Longford is Catholic, he will suggest to the Lord Chancellor the desirability of more equitably manning the magisterial bench in that county.

MR. WALTER LONG: Mr. Percival was, in the usual course, appointed by the Lord Chancellor upon the recommendation of His Majesty's lieutenant of the county. Ten magistrates have been appointed since April 1st, 1899, of whom it is believed six are members of the Irish Church, three are Catholics, and one a Methodist. The Lord Chancellor and the lieutenant of the county are always ready to consider the names of any properly qualified Catholic gentlemen which may be brought to their notice.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that on several occasions public boards in the county have sent forward the names of responsible Catholic gentlemen, and no attention has been paid to them?

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not aware of that.

Youghal Auxiliary Asylum.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, in view of the fact that appointments to the office of visiting physician to Irish lunatic asylums have been abolished, he will explain how the Lord-Lieutenant has been able to sanction the appointment of a visiting physician to the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum.

MR. WALTER LONG: The appointment of visiting physician was abolished prior to the passing of the Local Government Act, 1898; but Section 84 (1) (b) of this Act empowers asylum committees to appoint an assistant medical officer, who is under the control of the resident superintendent. This is the appointment the Lord-Lieutenant sanctioned.

Underfed School Children in Ireland.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Local Government Board is willing to adopt the Order issued by the President of the English Local Government Board, dated April 26th, 1905, and addressed to the several Poor Law Unions in England and Wales, making provision for the supply of necessary food to underfed children attending elementary schools, in view of the extent to which poverty exists in Ireland.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Local Government Board are advised that they have no power under the Irish Poor Law to make such an Order. The legal question will be referred to the law officers for advice.

Enniskillen Assizes—Case of Owen Cleary.

MR. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that a man named Owen Cleary was convicted at the summer assizes, held in Enniskillen on July 8th, 1904, and sentenced to three years penal servitude, that subsequently the statements made at the trial were found to be untrue, that a memorial was afterwards presented to the Lord-Lieutenant narrating all the facts as to Cleary's innocence, that the prayer of the memorial was refused, that after the publication of the Beck case Cleary was requested by the Governor of Maryborough Prison to send forward another memorial, dated January 12th, 1905, and that his sentence was commuted by the Lord-Lieutenant on February 1st; and whether, seeing that a miscarriage of justice has occurred, he will say what steps the Government propose to take by way of compensating Cleary for the injury he has sustained.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This man was, in the opinion of the learned Judge who tried the case, properly convicted of rape. The only new information subsequently obtained was that the woman had not given her true name, and that there was some suspicion that her character was not so good as she had represented it to be; but nothing transpired to show that the accused was not guilty. The Judge, however, informed the Lord-Lieutenant that had he been aware that the woman's character was not as represented at the trial, he would probably have passed a less severe sentence. The memorials only prayed for a reduction of the sentence, and His Excellency, taking into consideration the matters I have mentioned, ultimately ordered the release of the accused on January 28th last. No miscarriage of justice, as is referred to, occurred in the case. The Governor of the prison made no request or suggestion to the prisoner.

Youghal Auxiliary Asylum Accounts.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the auditor has not yet signed the accounts in connection with the Auxiliary Asylum at Youghal.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The audit of the accounts of the Cork District Lunatic Asylum, which embraces those in connection with the Auxiliary Asylum at Youghal, has been completed for the half-year ended 30th September, 1904. The audit for the half-year to 31st March last has not yet been undertaken.

Youghal Asylum Chaplain's Residence.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the house built by public money for a resident medical superintendent in connection with the Auxiliary Asylum at Youghal is at present occupied by a Roman Catholic chaplain; and, if so, will he explain whether this change has the sanction of the Inspectors of Lunacy.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. There is no legal provision which requires that the sanction of the inspectors should be obtained in such a matter.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the physician lives within a very easy distance of the asylum, and that no complaint has ever been received that the welfare of the patients is neglected, but that, on the contrary, the arrangement gives complete satisfaction.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No complaints have been brought to my knowledge.

Mr. SLOAN: But is it legal for this house thus to be occupied?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I cannot answer that until I have looked more fully into the circumstances. I am inquiring into all the matters connected with this asylum just now.

Irish Local Government Board Auditors.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many of the Local Government Board auditors in Ireland were previously accountants, or held or hold any certificate from the Institute of Chartered Accountants or any kindred body; whether he can state if the Public Bodies Order, 1904, for Ireland was approved of by the present staff of auditors; whether the effect of the Order will be to confine the duties of the auditors to the correction of figures and the noting of illegal payments, and to throw upon the local bodies the onus of preparing for the auditors a draft accountant's statement; and whether he is aware that such a system was unanimously condemned in the Report of the Joint Select Committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

MR. WALTER LONG: Ten out of the staff of seventeen auditors had experience of public accounts prior to their appointment. The Answer to the second inquiry is in the affirmative. The Order will not have the effect suggested in the third inquiry, but will render the audit more searching, and consequently of greater value. The Joint Committee on Municipal Trading expressed the opinion that the duties of auditors should not be confined to the mere certification of figures; but such limited system of audit does not prevail in Ireland. The recommendations of the Committee did not apply to Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH: How many have a certificate from the Institute of Chartered Accountants or some similar body?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say.

MR. MACVEAGH: I can. There are none.

Appointment of Auditors by the Irish Local Board.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the recommendation of the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons on Municipal Trading that none but members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants or of the Incorporated Society of Accountants and Auditors should be appointed by local authorities as auditors, he will undertake that in any future appointments as public auditors in Ireland the same qualifications will be insisted upon that the Joint Committee urged in the case of the local auditors who are subject to the public auditors.

MR. WALTER LONG: Local Government Board auditors in Ireland have to satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners not only of their knowledge of accounts, but also of their general proficiency, including a knowledge of the Poor Laws. The questions which come before them for decision are questions of law quite as much as of accounts. No change in the present system of appointment is proposed.

Irish Local Authorities' Accounts.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons on Municipal Trading laid down that the Local Government Departments should consult the Institute of Chartered Accountants or the Incorporated Society of Accountants and Auditors before prescribing a standard form of keeping accounts for local authorities; and whether any such conference or consultation took place prior to the issue of the Public Bodies Order, 1904, for Ireland.

MR. WALTER LONG: This recommendation of the Committee had special reference to the question of municipal trading, and was not extended by them to the case of Ireland, where such trading has made little headway. The Answer to the latter inquiry is in the negative. Local authorities in Ireland, before embarking on any large scheme of municipal trading, will be required to submit their accounts in such matters in a form which will meet the Committee's recommendations on the subject.

MR. MACVEAGH said that, as a matter of fact, the local authorities had themselves to do certain work because the auditors were not competent.

Case of Constable Anderson, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the persistent attacks made on a permanent official of the Irish Government in connection with the case of Constable Anderson, he will grant a public inquiry into all the circumstances connected with the dismissal and reinstatement of Constable Anderson.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir. I see no reason to grant the proposed inquiry.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I ask whether, in view of the exceedingly serious nature of the accusations which are being made by hon. Members against certain members of the Irish Government, and in view of the conflict that has arisen between the Member for Dover and certain Members of the House on matters of fact, the right hon. Gentleman will not say that it is in the public interest to grant a full inquiry into the circumstances of the case.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): May I ask whether the Under-Secretary for Ireland has authorised the hon. Members for Waterford and East Mayo to take up this question?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will at once answer that insinuation. I have had no communication, direct or indirect, with the Under-Secretary on this question.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Then the hon. Member is unauthorised?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Were you authorised by Lord Londonderry?

MR. WALTER LONG: I am certain that my hon. friend is mistaken as to the Under-Secretary having any knowledge or any share in the putting of this Question. As the hon. Gentleman who put the additional Question is aware, a controversy has arisen over two totally different subjects—first, whether or not the case of Constable Anderson was properly dealt with; and, secondly, the share which the Under-Secretary had in the conduct of the case. On the first head I have to say that there seems to be no necessity for an inquiry, and on the second point my right hon. friend the late Chief Secretary has stated that the charges against the Under-Secretary are unfounded and ought not to have been brought forward. I have examined the Papers dealing with the subject, and my view agrees with that of my right hon. friend the Member for Dover that there is no necessity for an inquiry, nor could a good result come out of further investigation, which, as I am advised, is unnecessary.

MR. DILLON: In view of the fact that recently in the House a statement was made by the late Chief Secretary, which I cannot accept as having been accurately repeated by the right hon. Gentleman, and was challenged——

MR. T. L. CORBETT: I rise to a point of order——

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member for East Mayo is in possession of the House.

MR. DILLON: Hon. Members opposite are evidently very much afraid of the facts. I notice with interest their extreme anxiety. I ask whether, in view of what occurred recently in the House, when the hon. Member for North Antrim flatly contradicted the right hon. Member for Dover, and asserted publicly in the House that the charges made against the Under-Secretary for Ireland were absolutely true——

MR. T. L. CORBETT again rose to order amid loud cries of "Sit down."

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): He is rising to a point of order.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): Why do not you name him?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Will the hon. Member wait and see the purport of the Question.

MR. DILLON: Whether in view of the fact that the Chief Secretary will not either grant a public inquiry into all the facts of this case or inform the House whether he has studied the facts himself, he will make a public statement in reply to the charges brought publicly in the House by the Member for North Antrim?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have already stated that I do not consider any inquiry necessary, and that no good object could be served by holding it. I do not understand what form it is suggested that the inquiry should take, nor what its scope should be in order to carry out the object of the hon. Member. I stated just now that I had myself examined the case, and I confirm absolutely the view expressed by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover and the action taken in this matter—action for which he was alone responsible—that the charges made against the Under-Secretary of having unduly influenced the policy of the Government were unfounded. I do not see that any good object would be served by an inquiry, nor do I realise what form any such inquiry could take.

Mr. DILLON: My Question on the Paper indicated fully the form and the scope of the inquiry—namely, "A public inquiry into all the circumstances connected with the dismissal and reinstatement of Constable Anderson." Inasmuch as so much public scandal has arisen, I desire that all the facts should be made public. We are not afraid of facts. I ask the right hon. Gentleman, however, whether I am to understand his reply as implying that there is not an atom of foundation for any of the charges made against Sir Antony MacDonnell in connection with this case.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I do not think that I can add anything to what I have already said on the subject. I have stated frankly what I believe to be the true story of this case, and I cannot in answer to Questions deal more fully with the subject nor add anything to what I have said.

Mr. DILLON: What we desire is that all the facts should be made public. We are not afraid of facts.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: You are making a speech.

Mr. MACVEAGH: That is more than you can make.

Mr. DILLON: Am I to understand, from what the Chief Secretary has said, that there is not an atom of foundation for any of the charges made against Sir Antony MacDonnell?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have said frankly what I believe to be the true history of the case, and I cannot deal further with it in answer to a Question.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to give notice, then, that I shall raise this question again on the Chief Secretary's salary.

Mr. MACVEAGH: And the Ulstermen will run away.

Mr. REDDY: The cowards.

Irish Police and the Rev. Father Dunne, C.C.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why on last week the Reverend Father Dunne, C.C., on being changed by the Bishop of the diocese from the parish of Cappatagle to Ballymackward, had to telegraph to the district inspector for permission for his friends in Cappatagle to accompany him to his new sphere of duty, which is in the neighbouring parish.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am unable to explain why the reverend gentleman telegraphed this inquiry to the district inspector, but the reply given by the latter was what might have been anticipated, namely, that there would be no interference with the band on such an occasion.

Ballinasloe Petty Sessions Clerk and the Mahon Estate.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Rothwell, the petty sessions clerk of Ballinasloe, is in possession of eighteen acres of the Mahon, Ballydonlan, property purchased by the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, how long has he been, and what is the nature of his tenancy.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answers I have already given him. No further proceedings before the Commissioners have taken place.

Mr. ROCHE: I have never got an Answer to the Question: is Mr. Rothwell in possession of these eighteen acres. I know for a positive fact he is.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It seems to me that our positions should be reversed, for the hon. Member is giving rather than asking for information. I cannot help thinking the hon. Member is referring to the desmesne lands.

Mr. ROCHE: No, I am not.

The Mahon Estate.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of

Ireland whether Martin Shea has signed an agreement to purchase a portion of the grazing land on the Mahon, Ballydonlan, Estate, purchased by the Estates Commissioners, which he previously held on the eleven months system; and, if so, what was his rent per acre then compared with future rent to the Government; and whether several of the tenants who signed agreements to purchase have since petitioned the Commissioners to take back the land, as they consider the future rent an impossible one.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Mr. Shea has purchased ten acres on this estate, which he held as tenant. His rent was £1 8s. per acre, and the purchase annuity amounts to £1 3s. 6d. per acre. No such application as is mentioned in the last inquiry has been received by the Commissioners.

Clerkships in the Dublin Law Courts.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say when it is intended to hold the next examination for clerkships in the Dublin Law Courts; and whether there will be open competition for future appointments.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): I am informed that the next examination for junior clerkships in the High Court in Ireland will, according to the ordinary course, be held whenever the necessity shall arise for filling a vacancy by open competition.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is an examination always held when a vacancy occurs?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Yes, Sir, whenever it is thought desirable.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Are any clerks appointed without examination?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I must ask for notice of that.

Pirrie-Iveagh Motor Scheme.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is in a position to state if any, and, if so, what, progress has been made with the Pirrie-Iveagh motor scheme during the past six months; and, if not, whether he can state if the scheme has been abandoned.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have nothing to add to the replies given by my right hon. and learned friend to the hon. Member's previous Questions of 2nd† and 9th March.†

Mr. MACVEAGH: My Question deals with the last six months only.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the scheme has been abandoned?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am not sure. There was a condition that the county councils should make certain improvements of the roads, and that has not been acted upon.

Mr. MACVEAGH: What progress has been made in the last six months?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I believe none.

Afforestation in Ireland.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that with a view to promoting afforestation in Ireland it has been decided to have an Arbor Day celebrated in November; and can he say whether any, and, if so, what, facilities for the purchase of trees will be given to local associations throughout the country which desire to celebrate the day.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No representations have been made to the Department as to an Arbor Day celebration this year. Facilities are given under the county agricultural and horticultural schemes for encouraging the planting of trees. These include the purchase and re-sale at cost price of trees to residents in counties which adopt the scheme.

Sitting of Land Sub-Commission at Killarney.

Mr. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the next sitting of the Sub-Commission will be held in Killarney.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 187, 929.

Mr. WALTER LONG: On the 27th June next.

Belturbet Postal Service.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why there is a postal service from Cavan to Belturbet by the 9.50 a.m. train, and what is the cost of same; whether, seeing that Cavan has this service, he will explain why Belturbet is denied similar facilities; and will he say what would be the cost of a service from Belturbet to Cavan by the 9.10 a.m. train.

Lord STANLEY: The mail from Cavan to Belturbet by the 9.45 a.m. train was commenced many years ago. If the hon. Member desires me to inquire whether its continuance is justified, I will do so. Its cost cannot be precisely ascertained, but it is probably about the same as the cost of the suggested bag in the other direction which, as I told the hon. Member recently, would be about £6 or £8 a year. The amount of correspondence which it is anticipated would be included in a bag from Belturbet to Cavan would be so small that there is no sufficient ground for the establishment of the proposed despatch.

Dublin Bricklayers Lock-out.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether his attention has been called to the lock-out by the master builders of Dublin of their bricklayers; whether he is aware that the masters' association have refused to submit the question upon which the lock-out took place to arbitration; and whether, seeing that work on several Government contracts has been stopped owing to the lock-out, and in view of the distress existing among the families of the labourers and others owing to the prolonged stoppage of work, he will use his office, as head of the Conciliation Board, to induce the employers to submit the point which led up to the lock-out to arbitration.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): My attention has been called to the dispute in the Dublin building trade. I understand that the employers are prepared for arbitration on certain conditions. No application has been received from either party by the Board of Trade to take action under the Conciliation Act.

Mr. NANNETTI: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the employees are prepared to accept arbitration which the employers are not, and will he see that Government work is not stopped by this dispute? Will the Department put in force the Arbitration Act?

Mr. BONAR LAW was understood to reply in the negative.

Mr. NANNETTI: Then what is the use of the Act?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I am informed there is no Government contract concerned except one involving about £30.

Marine Insurance Bill.

Mr. JAMES REID (Greenock): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can say when it is proposed to take the Second Reading of the Marine Insurance Bill.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I cannot fix a date for taking this Bill, but I do not think there need be any serious obstacle in the way of passing it as I understand that the measure is practically uncontroversial.

Ecclesiastical Discipline Commission.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can say when the findings of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the ritualistic practices and abuses in the Church of England are likely to be published; if the Commission has made an Interim Report; and if a complete Report on this subject may be expected before the general election.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to another Question put on February 21st† with regard to the same two subjects—namely, the date of the Report of the Commission and the date of the general election—I expressed my inability to forecast the particular time at which either of those events will fall; and that inability is still maintained.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Is there any time limit for the sittings of Royal Commissions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is there any time limit for the Government?

Scottish Churches Bill.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state when he will introduce the Scottish Churches Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill is in an advanced state of preparation, and I think I can promise to introduce it before Whitsuntide; but there is no chance of taking the Second Reading before Whitsuntide.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Will this Bill take precedence over the Unemployed Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that Question.

The Colonial Conference.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to a statement reported to have been made at a public meeting at Farnham by the Secretary of State for India, to the effect that the subject of preference to the Colonies has been reserved by the Government for consideration with the Colonies; that they will call the Colonies into council, and propose to confer with them next year on that very important subject: whether the Secretary of State for India has correctly stated the intention of the Government; and, if so, whether it is now proposed that the fiscal question shall be dealt with during the lifetime of the present Parliament.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I only read the hon. Gentleman's notice this morning, and I can find no such passage in the only report of the speech which I have been able to consult — namely, the report in *The Times*. [Cries of "It is in the *Standard*."] I have not seen that. But I see no necessary inconsistency between that statement and the often-declared policy of the Government—namely, that the question of fiscal policy shall not be dealt with by the present Parliament.

Mr. SOARES: Then I am to understand that the Secretary for India did correctly state the intentions of the Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend made a statement which is not inconsistent, as far as I know, with the declared policy of the Government, which is that of not dealing with fiscal reform in the lifetime of the present Parliament. Nor do I see any inherent improbability in the hypothesis on which my right hon. friend may have proceeded—namely, that before the last day of 1906 the Party now in power shall have returned in possession of a large majority.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman adheres to the declaration made by Lord Lansdowne that the question of colonial preference will not be submitted to a Colonial Conference without first seeking the mandate of the country on the question of the conference.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I venture to say that it is not very convenient to discuss this interesting topic in this rather sporadic fashion at Question time; but I am not aware of any statement of Lord Lansdowne's which conflicts with opinions which I have previously expressed in respect to the position the Government takes up in regard to the fiscal question in this Parliament, and it is only in this Parliament that

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 780.

Members have a right to question me. They always tell me that I, at any rate, shall be one of the most insignificant members of the next Parliament.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Owing to the very important nature of the statement made by the Secretary of State for India and the Answer of the Prime Minister, I beg to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the statement made by the Secretary of State for India at Farnham that it is proposed to confer with the Colonies next year on the subject of colonial preferences, notwithstanding the declarations of the First Lord of the Treasury and of Lord Lansdowne that the subject will not be dealt with by the Government during the lifetime of the present Parliament.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is the view of the Secretary of State for India.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This cannot be brought within the plea of urgency. The speech of the Secretary for India was made some days ago, and therefore, so far as urgency is concerned, the hon. Member is too late. Then, again, as the Conference is only to be held next year, it can hardly be said that the matter is one of urgent importance.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: On the question of order, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, surely Motions for adjournment have been allowed in reference to the fiscal question, although the Prime Minister has declared that it is not going to be dealt with during the present session of Parliament. May I submit also that it is a declaration made by the Minister responsible for India, which will be represented at this Conference, in respect to a perfectly new policy, departing from the policy of the Government in respect to something which may happen during the lifetime of the present Parliament? Therefore, I submit that it is a question of urgency. As to the second point, the fact that the speech was made some days ago, I may say that it was only yesterday afternoon that we saw it, for it did not appear in the ordinary reports—the report in *The Times* is very summarised—and we could not move before, because there was a Motion for the adjournment yesterday.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: On the merits of the importance of the question of course I say nothing. I dare say the hon. Member has a very good case on that. But I really think it would be stretching the rule too far. After all, whether a decision is come to to-day or in a month's time, or before the end of the session, really seems to me immaterial.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE: We cannot raise it at all unless you accept this Motion.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It can hardly be said that instructions to be given in reference to the holding of a Conference next year is a matter of urgent importance.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: May I be permitted, in justice to my right hon. friend, who is not here, to say that I have his distinct authority for saying that he has been misinterpreted. All that he said was subject to the view which I have constantly expressed.

Mr. SOARES: Do we understand that he repudiates the report then?

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask a Question as to the order of business. The first order of the day—the appointment of the Committee on the Telephone Agreement—was announced last night, and considerable objection was taken to it. I hope it may be postponed. Will the right hon. Gentleman at the same time indicate the general arrangements for next week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As to the Telephone Agreement Committee I shall be glad to meet the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman as far as possible, although time is rather of the essence of the matter. There is a general wish on both sides that the Committee shall report, and that before the end of the session the Government shall be in a position to find a day for the discussion of the Report. I shall be prepared to postpone the Motion for the appointment of the Committee until Monday next, and I hope that the debate will not assume undue proportions, but that the House will assist the Government to carry through the appointment of the Committee, which has been nominated in deference to the general wish of the House. To-morrow Committee on the Agricultural Rates Bill will be resumed. On Thursday Votes 10 and 12 of the Navy Estimates will be put down first, and the remaining Votes afterwards, except Vote 8, which it is usual to leave till later in the season. On Monday the appointment of the Telephone Committee will come first, and then the Committee on the Budget Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR STANLEY (Lancashire, Ormskirk): Can the Local Government Board Vote be taken at an early date, in order that questions relating to the driving of motors may be discussed.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: May I also ask whether, when that Vote is taken, the First Lord will see that the whole time is not monopolised by the discussion on motors, in order that there may be some discussion of the Order relating to the feeding of school children.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Perhaps in the arrangement of Supply next week the Government will take into account the fact that Irish Supply has not been discussed at all this session. I hope the First Lord will in this matter consult the convenience of the Irish Members.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): Has the right hon. Gentleman any information as to the rumoured seizure of a port in China by Germany?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I confess that this mixture of Questions is rather perplexing. As to the Local Government Board Vote, I think there are reasons for believing that the House would like a discussion at an early period, and, though I cannot give a pledge, I suggest that it may be convenient to allot Thursday week for this Vote. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil asks whether the whole day is to be monopolised by the discussion of motors, and whether room cannot be found for a discussion—not the first discussion, though a discussion of a very important point—dealing with the feeding of school children. It does not rest with me to decide as to the order of topics on a Vote. The only control the Government have over the order of topics is that of moving the closure when they think a topic has been sufficiently discussed, but that is not a very satisfactory way of dealing with the order of business. Another hon. Member asks me a Question in regard to a rumour of some German action in China. I have heard the rumour, but I neither have nor can give any information on that subject. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Waterford, I have to ask him to communicate with my right hon. friend near me through the usual channels.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will bear this in mind before definitely fixing the Supply next week, as there are several matters connected with the government of Ireland which we are most anxious to discuss.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I desire to ask the Prime Minister whether he will help the people who are endeavouring, during the summer months, to make some provision to deal with the unemployed during the winter? Will he press forward his Bill? That is the most important Question addressed to him to-day.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Notice must be given of it.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

Ordered, That the Evidence of the Select Committee on Workmen's Trains in Session 1904 be referred to the Select Committee on Workmen's Trains.—(*Colonel Bowles.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill: Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. MacVeagh.

Report to lie upon the Table.

FINANCE BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Question again proposed.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [15th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he did not think it too much to suggest that the proposals embodied in the Finance Bill as placed before the House came as a welcome relief, not on account of their intrinsic merits, but rather on account of the fears which they had had as to what the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have proposed. They all knew that he was hankering after protection, but he had a hope that the right hon. Gentleman's experience at the Treasury would give him that education which his predecessors had enjoyed, and would cure him of the old-time, foolish, and exploded theory that it was possible to make people more comfortable by increasing the cost of living. If what they saw in the newspapers was correct, the fiscal proposals of the Government were now to be dropped in view of the meeting of June 2nd, and therefore they might take it that by that time the education of the right hon. Gentleman in a sound fiscal policy would be complete.

They should first look very briefly at the burden of taxation to be imposed in the Finance Bill. That was a very serious problem, especially in view of the fact that when they considered the outcome of the last year's revenue they found that taking taxation on the basis of the previous year the produce displayed a diminution of £1,300,000, which proved that they had come to a stop in the productive power of their taxation on its present basis. He did not intend to go back to the last Liberal year of Administration in order to compare it with the financial position as it stood to-day, but he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to glance for a moment at the year 1899 under the present Administration—the last year before the outbreak of the war. The expenditure had increased during the previous four years by about £14,000,000, but he started from 1899, and he found that the taxation—and he was going to exclude Post Office and all untaxed revenue, and to deal only with taxation which was placed on the people—he found that the product of the taxed revenue in that year was £89,450,000. The taxation as proposed in the present year in this Bill would produce £119,000,000, an increase in that short period of £29,500,000, on the taxed revenue of the country. If they looked at the total revenue the comparison was even worse, because they were going to impose taxation for the current year amounting to £142,000,000, while the produce in 1899 was £108,000,000, or an increase of £34,000,000 sterling. They had the war taxes still—the taxes on tea, sugar, tobacco, beer and spirits, which were imposed on account of the war, and he thought they were entitled to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when they were going to get remission of those war taxes. Now, in the present year he had given them a relief to the extent of 2d. per pound on tea, but that only bore a very small proportion to the extra taxes which were placed on the people for war purposes, and which were now being continued for ordinary expenditure.

It was no doubt easier to preach economy than to practice it, but he did think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not really recognise the gavity of our present financial position—the disturbance of the money market, the prejudicial effect on trade, and the dislocation of commerce which had been caused by the increasing burden of taxation they now had to bear, and he thought the time had come when a protest should be made against excessive expenditure. No one denied in the abstract that it was excessive, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be the first to uphold economy. Not the least injurious effect of the South African War was the fact that it occasioned an utter disregard for economy. It gave full vent to the natural Departmental craving for expenditure, and while they were taught to think in millions the Departments thought that if they only spent in thousands they were making a real saving, whereas before they had only been spending in hundreds.

The estimated expenditure for the present year was £142,000,000,a ghastly total, and if they added to that the local taxation expenditure and the expenditure on the naval and military works, they got a total for their annual Budget of £160,000,000. If that total was compared with the total in 1895, namely, £102,000,000, they got an increase of £58,000,000 a year. If they looked only at the ordinary expenditure there was an increase in that period of £48,000,000 a year. The expenditure in the present Budget was slightly less than that estimated for last year, and he supposed they ought to be thankful for small mercies, but he was convinced that the House would agree that the time had come when that excessive expenditure should be diminished, and he should like to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer take a bold stand for economy. He, however, hardly ever mentioned it; he rather seemed to think that his duty was to justify the existing expenditure of the Departments instead of putting the brake on, and making some reductions. He would concede this, that on last year's expenditure there was a reduction of nearly £1,000,000 sterling. That was to the good. If they looked at the expenditure of the current year they found that on the Navy Estimates they had a reduction of £3,500,000, and considering that this was Nelson's year, he thought that it showed considerable courage on the part of the Department to make that reduction—it showed some return to sanity. He would like to point out that in the year which he had chosen for comparison, namely, 1899, the year before the war, the Navy Estimates were £24,000,000. This year, however, they were £33,250,000, even giving effect to the reduction which had been made. If they turned to the Army they found an increase in Army expenditure of £1,000,000 over last year's Estimates. He thought that in these times of peace that was entirely indefensible. They had a statement from the Prime Minister on the preceding Thursday showing that in the view of the Committee of Defence there was no risk of invasion, and surely in justice they were entitled to believe that the Army expenditure ought to decrease. But again, if they took the same year for comparison they found that in 1899 the military expenditure was £20,000,000, whereas they were budgeting this year for an expenditure of £30,000,000, or an increase of £10,000,000 on the Army. This was in addition to an increase of £9,000,000 on the Navy, and if they put the Army and Navy expenditure together for 1899 they got a total of £44,000,000, whereas the total for the present year was £63,000,000. That was entirely exclusive of the expenditure on naval and military works. Really, the ways of the Government were past finding out. They had the statement of the Prime Minister——

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The total includes annuities, whereas you said that it was irrespective of the expenditure on works.

*MR. McCRAE said that it was irrespective of the loan expenditure on naval and military works, a point with which he proposed to deal later on. It was, of course, inclusive of the sum budgeted this year as annual contribution in respect of naval and military works. They had three Army schemes. They had that of the Committee of Defence; they had that of the Army Council; and they had, in the third place, that of the Secretary for War, who evidently differed from both the others. If they looked at the military position at the present time any fair-minded man would say there ought to be a large diminution in our Army expenditure. No doubt there was a great deal of extra expenditure occasioned by the war, but he would give the Chancellor of the Exchequer a precedent which he hoped he would follow. The same thing happened after the Crimean War. When Mr. Gladstone became Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1859 the Army and Navy expenditure amounted to £26,000,000, and in the intervening period between 1859 and 1866 it rose to £28,000,000. Mr. Gladstone set himself to reduce expenditure largely occasioned on account of the war, and the consequence was that when he quitted the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1866 he had brought back the naval and military expenditure to what it was in 1857. That was what the present Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to put before himself to-day; he ought to attempt to bring back the naval and military expenditure to the point, not at which it stood when the present Government took office, but at which it was in the year before the war—in 1899. He had hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would follow Mr. Gladstone and say that economy was the first and greatest article in his financial creed.

But that did not sum up all the financial shortcomings of the present Government. They borrowed too largely for war expenditure, and as a consequence we had added to the National Debt a sum of £160,000,000. Might he point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer what had been done previously by this country in relation to expenditure of the same kind? Take what was done during the Crimean War. In 1854, before that war broke out, the National Debt amounted to £802,000,000. By 1857, on account of the war expenditure, it had gone up to £837,000,000, an increase of £35,000,000. The country set itself to get rid of that debt at the earliest possible opportunity, and the result was that within ten years—by 1867—they had wiped off a sum equivalent to what was spent on the Crimean War, and which had been added to the Debt. Would the Chancellor of the Exchequer undertake to wipe out in ten years or even in twenty years, the addition which had been made to the National Debt on account of the South African War?

He had a still more serious charge to make against the present financial arrangements, a charge altogether apart from expenditure on the war. For the first time, he believed in the history of this country, the National Debt had been added to in times of peace. He did not know whether the House really realised the true significance of that. Did they realise that in a year of peace the National Debt had been added to? Last year we increased our national indebtedness by £2,250,000. That was unprecedented, unjustifiable, and indefensible, and it really brought them to the German method of finance, whereby they were borrowing for ordinary current expenditure. To put it in another manner, the Government was not paying its way. Now the gross liabilities on March 31st last amounted to £796,700,000 sterling, a sum almost equivalent to the National Debt away back in 1854. That was a comparison which should cause them to pause. He noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech gave no comparison between the gross debt as at March 31st, 1904, and debt as at March 31st, 1905. He gave a direct comparison in regard to the Funded Debt which had been reduced, but for the first time he did not place before the House in parallel columns the gross liabilities of the State in 1904 and 1905. The consequence was that no one reading the Budget speech, or listening to it, could have realised that in that year the National Debt had been increased by the sum he had mentioned. No doubt he spoke of the Sinking Fund, but then most people were rather disinclined to consider the question of the Sinking Fund, and they appeared to think that there was some mystery about it. He did not know that there was any mystery at all about it. It was merely an annual contribution to wipe off debt, and if the Debt, instead of being reduced, was increased, anyone would see that the Sinking Fund was inoperative, and, therefore, that something was wrong. It was clear that there was no adequate provision for the reduction of the Debt. The man in the street could understand that; it did not require a financier to point out that if there was no reduction being made the Sinking Fund was insufficient. Now the Sinking Fund as regarded the Funded Debt was meant to reduce the Debt by about £7,500,000 a year. From 1893 to 1898 they did reduce their gross liabilities year by year by about £7,000,000 sterling, notwithstanding the capital expenditure on naval and military works. Now they were borrowing more than they were paying off and the naval and military works were mainly responsible for that.

Might he point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that they had had really no opportunity before the Budget of discussing the amount that these works would cost during the coming financial year? In regard to the other estimates of expenditure they were discussed before the close of the preceding financial year, but the Naval and Military Works Bills were not, and even the one for the current year had not yet been produced. All that, he thought, tended to extravagance, because it really obscured the issue from the House. They had gone on spending year after year without realising how the expenditure on account of the naval and military works had increased. The Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day, in reply to some observations he had made, said they had a sinking fund carried on the Votes which he described as abnormally high. But he would like just to draw the attention of the House to the figures to show how vain the boast was. He was taking the figures for the last seven years. In 1899 the outstanding debt on account of naval and military works was £7,000,000; two years later, in 1901, it was £14,000,000. In 1902 it was £20,000,000; in 1903, £27,500,000; in 1904, nearly £32,000,000; and in 1905, £41,500,000, while the estimated expenditure for the current financial year brought it up to £47,500,000. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer talked about an abnormally high sinking fund he begged him to remember that while he was laying aside under this head of expenditure a sum of £1,500,000 a year he had been borrowing since the first date at the rate of over £8,000,000 a year. How long would that increase of £7,000,000 go on? In his opinion this expenditure ought to be added to the ordinary taxation of the year. It was not capital expenditure in the real sense. It was bad finance to treat it as such, and he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, could he really defend it?

Now, in the present Finance Bill the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to increase the Sinking Fund contribution by £1,000,000 a year, and here let him say that he thought it was very unfortunate that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had hit upon the lottery method of dealing with these Exchequer bonds. The lottery system was entirely foreign to our finance; there had been no advantage reaped from it. The interest to be paid was very high, and he begged to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it would have been better if he had simply added the £1,000,000 a year to the ordinary Sinking Fund, and he would then have given to any future Chancellor of the Exchequer a free hand in dealing with it. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman expected to be in his place next year, but if he were his criticism as to a large Debt conversion scheme would not apply. The right hon. Gentleman ought to have dealt this year with the floating debt, which amounted to £71,633,000, according to the National Debt Returns issued yesterday morning. He would like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer why he did not propose to deal in a comprehensive way with this floating debt. He had before pointed out a way in which he might have dealt with it by means of terminable annuities. Of course, he quite realised that the right hon. Gentleman could not have dealt with the floating debt without facing up to the question of the Transvaal contribution. That was an essential part of any comprehensive scheme to deal with the Unfunded Debt. Although £30,000,000 seemed to be a large sum to ask from the Transvaal, this country was laying aside for the payment of principal and interest for the reduction of debt over £30,000,000 per annum. He would like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider that in 1885—twenty years ago—we laid aside a sum of £29,649,784 when the National Debt was less by £60,000,000 than it was to-day, and when there was no Naval and Military Works expenditure. Would the Chancellor of the Exchequer frankly tell the House, first of all, what sum he intended to spend this year on Naval and Military Works; and secondly, what was the amount of all the Sinking Fund which was to go during the current year to redeem the Debt? There was an estimate on the first head of £8,000,000, and on the second head of £10,100,000. Was that so?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): Yes.

*MR. McCRAE: That meant that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to reduce the National Debt by £2,000,000, so that there would only be an effective Sinking Fund of £2,000,000 to go to reduce the gross liabilities of the State, instead of £7,000,000 a year which we were paying off before 1899. He thought he had shown that whether they consider the burdens on the people—the ordinary expenditure, the capital expenditure, or the state of the National Debt, they had to face a grave financial position. He hoped that they were at the end of this period of lavish expenditure, unprecedented borrowing, and no adequate provision for the extinction of debt. It was a position which required great courage and ability to deal with. This Finance Bill, although it avoided any gross defiance of the principles of sound finance unhappily experienced in the past, did not meet the requirements of the very grave financial position in which the nation found itself after ten long weary years of incompetence and gross extravagance under the present Government.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that undoubtedly this matter of the Debt could not be too often brought before the House of Commons and the nation. The Debt had increased, was increasing, and was not going to be diminished. The Debt would be greater next year than it was now. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not deny that. If the right hon. Gentleman could show that he was wrong in that assertion, he should welcome the demonstration. He thought he could prove to the House that not only was the Debt greater this year than last, but that it would be greater, as a whole, next year than this. Exception must be taken to the Treasury terminology. The Treasury treated one part alone of the Debt as Funded Debt, but, in fact, all debt that was not Funded Debt was Unfunded Debt. Instead of putting all these debts together and calling the total Unfunded Debt, the Treasury made a selection from them, called that Unfunded Debt, and set up a capital account which did not exist. As showing that it did not exist the Treasury put down the assets of the British Empire at £40,000,000—less than one-third of the total annual revenue.

He earnestly begged the attention of the House to some very simple figures. A Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he brought in his Budget, was mainly occupied in omitting from his Budget statement large sums that ought to be in it. When he talked of the Debt he talked of dead-weight debt. All debt was dead-weight debt, even if it had a sinking fund attached to it. The right hon. Gentleman talked of the Funded Debt and told the House it was being reduced. But the right hon. Gentleman left out of account a far more important, far more obnoxious debt which was not funded, regularised, or duly provided with its own sinking fund as a permanent charge—and which was consequently the most dangerous form of debt—the unfunded debt of various kinds. The form of debt which he would first desire to see decreased was not the Funded, but the Unfunded Debt; but the contrary was the case. The Funded Debt was decreased by £2,000,000, on which interest at the rate of 2¾ per cent. was paid, while the other debts on which a higher rate of interest was paid were being increased. The Funded Debt had been decreased by £2,000,000; that part of the Unfunded Debt which the Treasury chose to call Unfunded Debt by £2,000,000, and the terminable annuity liability had been reduced by £3,600,000, or a total reduction of £7,600,000 this year. But what was called capital liability debt, which he held was an unfunded debt, and the most serious form of it—incurred for works—had been increased by £9,800,000. So that although the former kinds of debt had been decreased by £7,600,000, the nett result for the year was that our total absolute debt had not been decreased, but had been increased by £2,200,000. The final result was that the total absolute debt of the country was £796,700,000 at the end of the year.

Now, he had spoken of the capital liability debt incurred for works as being the most important and dangerous part of the whole debt; and it was so in this respect. It was the most dangerous because the Government could, within large limits, add to it at its will, and when it pleased. There were still £14,500,000 of that debt, which the Government had power to borrow, still unborrowed. And consequently without any assent of the House, without the knowledge of the House, the Government could borrow up to £14,500,000 in addition to this most obnoxious form of debt used for works. That was a very serious state of things. The House had, no doubt, given the Government authority to do this very dangerous thing, but he earnestly hoped that these discussions would have the effect—he believed that they had had already some effect—of making the Government far more wary in exercising their borrowing powers than they had been hitherto. There was another abuse connected with capital liability debt. The Government last year took £2,000,000 from the Treasury balances and applied that sum to the reduction of debt; but they borrowed £2,830,000 more than they required to issue for the works for which it was borrowed. There was really no necessity for borrowing that extra sum. The right hon. Gentleman would find in his own financial statement, page 5, that there was borrowed to meet capital expenditure £10,912,000, and that there was issued to meet capital expenditure £8,069,000. The difference was £2,843,000, which the Government borrowed for the purpose of issuing for these works, but did not issue.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I would point out that the hon. Gentleman has omitted to notice the fact that we had temporarily drawn on the Exchequer balances to the extent of £2,000,000 in the previous year on account of these works, and therefore we had to borrow in 1904–5 the £2,000,000 to repay the amount drawn from the Exchequer balances. The amount of money we over-borrowed last year was somewhat short of £1,000,000 of the amount required, which was a miscalculation on the part of the Department.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that the right hon. Gentleman explained the discrepancy by explaining that there was not one error, but two. The Government under-borrowed the previous year and over-borrowed this year to make up the deficiency, and even then there was at least £2,830,000 which went to swell the Treasury balances. There was a gravely dangerous power of borrowing under these Capital Expenditure Acts. Let the House observe that the Treasury balances were in this way repleted by nearly £3,000,000 which really did not belong to them.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: This is a matter which I explained in my statement. It was taken out of the Treasury balances the year before last. It was taken from the Treasury balances for the purpose of these capital accounts. The National Debt Commissioners were unable to supply this amount, and the first thing that had to be done when we had new borrowing powers, or when fresh money came into the hands of the Debt Commissioners, was to relieve ourselves from what we had paid. The hon. Member will find the whole transaction set out in my Budget speech.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought the National Debt account suggested, if it did not actually state it, that this £2,000,000 was taken from the Treasury balances this year. But, however that might be, it was an undoubted fact that the Government had this dangerous power of borrowing, and although they might exercise it with great skill and prudence, it was perfectly possible for them to borrow either less money or more than they required, and when they borrowed more it went to swell the balances, and this would make them look greater than they really were at the moment.

He had shown that the absolute debt at this moment was £2,200,000 more than it amounted to last year, but the House must not forget that there were other very serious liabilities this year. There were the guaranteed loans of £152,700,000, though, of course, the liability for those was not to the same extent or of the same completeness as that for the £796,000,000. Still, there was the liability, and they would perhaps never know how much of that they would have to bear. The guaranteed loans, he might point out, included this year another £10,000,000 for Irish land purchase. In addition to the guaranteed loans there were the contingent liabilities, including that to the Post Office Savings Bank. The particulars of the contingent liabilities were not set forth this year, but they could not amount to less than they did last year, which was £19,000,000. So that if they added the contingent liabilities to the guaranteed loans they had a total of £171,700,000 to add to the £796,000,000. If to those two added together was added £500,000 the House would see the total liabilities of the State amounted to no less than £968,200,000, although he admitted that all the liabilities were not of the same quality, some being more and others less absolute. There was, in addition to those liabilities, the awful local debt of near £500,000,000, which was also a liability of the subjects of the State, but which he did not add to the other because it had yet another quality. How had the right hon. Gentleman dealt with that?

He admitted that the right hon. Gentleman had shown considerable courage, but he had not dealt adequately with the matter. Let the House take what were called the lottery bonds. He asserted on a previous occasion that in effect by the issue of these lottery bonds the existing Unfunded Debt was extended for five years to the extent of £5,000,000. Section 7 of the Act showed that that was so. If the right hon. Gentleman could explain Section 7 taken in conjunction with the Supplementary War Loans Act of 1900 in another way he would be glad to hear the explanation, but otherwise it was impossible to read Section 7 without coming to the conclusion at which he had arrived, that in respect to £5,000,000 the right hon. Gentleman had assented to an extension of five years longer than it would have otherwise taken to extinguish.

He did not wish to raise again the ghost of the £30,000,000 war contribution, except to say that unless we got the £30,000,000 from the Transvaal he did not know how we were to provide for the repayment of the war loan, when its repayment became due. He did not envy the right hon. Gentleman who might be in office when that time came. He contended that they were entitled to recover that £30,000,000 at the hands of the Government; it was promised by a former Secretary for the Colonies, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, as an inducement to the House to guarantee the loan of £35,000,000. It was stated to be a payment in commutation of a sum of £100,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman thought was due, and to the extent of £10,000,000 was to be underwritten by competent persons in the Transvaal. As to the conditions, which were three, they had all been fulfilled. There was a bargain. We were to take £30,000,000 instead of £100,000,000, or at least £70,000,000, and that £30,000,000 was all to be paid in three years. Two and a-half years had gone by, and we had not received a penny of that sum. So complete a bargain had never been presented to this House as that presented by the late Colonial Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, speaking on behalf of the Government, under which the House guaranteed the loan of £35,000,000, and if that obligation was now to be thrown to the winds and explained away the Chancellor of the Exchequer who had to pay off the war loan would be put in a desperate position, while the greatest reproach would rest on the Government for the abandonment of that engagement. It was a most solemn engagement; none of the conditions had been violated; it was a freely accepted burden by the gentlemen who undertook the obligation to underwrite it, and a very serious damage would be done not only to the Government itself but to the cause of public faith in England if it were now abandoned. It did not behove the House to condemn the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in the production of this Bill. He had risen more to emphasise that great concern he felt at the increased and still increasing debt of this country, and the insufficient means taken to provide funds to wipe it off.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he desired to emphasise what had been already said on both sides of the House in reference to the reduction of debt. It was a question of the utmost importance to the country, and it was one upon which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would welcome the expression of the views of the House in favour of the more rapid reduction of debt. Ten years ago the net reduction of the debt was £7,000,000 a year. Since then we had had a war which cost us £260,000,000, and last year there was not only no reduction of debt, but an increase in the National Debt of £2,000,000. During the last six years the total debt of the country had increased by £160,000,000, and we had not up to the present moment reduced the war debt by a single penny. This was not the only instance in modern times of the National Debt being added to in time of peace. At the present time, in the fourth year of peace, we had no less than £23,000,000 of additional taxation, and the amount the right hon. Gentleman had promised by way of the utmost reduction would only be some £2,000,000, though there was all this enormous amount of additional taxation. This increase of taxation was attributed to what was called capital expenditure, the amount of which in naval and military works and things of that sort was really greater than really appeared on the face of the Financial Statement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech had referred to it as being about £40,000,000, but it was in reality much larger, because during the period from 1894 to 1898 there was each year a large sinking fund which used to go to the reduction of debt which had now been utilised for this purpose, in addition to which through the Sinking Fund something like £5,000,000 had been paid for capital expenditure. This expenditure was really £57,000,000; that was to say, one-third more than appeared in the accounts. In two years the country had borrowed £60,000,000 for the purpose of capital expenditure, which was a matter to which he thought consideration should be given.

The right hon. Gentleman, when dealing with debt, put it into two categories; one he called dead-weight debt and the other capital expenditure, against which he held assets in ships and works. But he (Mr. Buxton) denied that these naval and military works could in any sense of the word be regarded as assets. Assets were things which could be valued and at a favourable time sold out and the borrowed money repaid in that way. That was not the case here, and therefore the capital expenditure was as much a dead-weight debt on the country as the other expenditure which the right hon. Gentleman placed in that category. One of the worst tendencies of this borrowing on the one hand and paying off on the other and thus increasing the capital expenditure was that it resulted in an increase of the National Debt. As he understood, the Unfunded Debt had increased in the last six years by no less than £100,000,000, but during the same period the Funded Debt had been diminished by £40,000,000. Under these circumstances he asked, Would it not be better to apply the whole of the Sinking Fund to the purposes of diminishing not the Funded Debt but the Unfunded Debt, which at the present moment was far too large? The right hon. Gentleman had declared his strong desire to diminish the amount of capital expenditure, under certain conditions. That was necessary, and no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would admit that a considerable amount of money borrowed for these purposes would be much more usefully met out of the expenditure of the year. He had not much hope at the moment that the right hon. Gentleman, unless he took very strong action, would be able to reduce that expenditure on the naval and military programme to any extent. The expenditure, he supposed, must take its course, but they would warmly support the right hon. Gentleman in any proposals he made to reduce that expenditure and to bring it, as it ought to be brought, into the ordinary

Budget of the year, instead of its being had by means of Supplemental Estimates.

Having said so much with regard to the debt itself, he would now say a few words as to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman for the reduction of the debt. The amount to be applied to the Sinking Fund this year was £10,000,000, but the real significance of that was not the amount to be utilised in one year for that purpose, but the specific amount the right hon. Gentleman intended to apply to it out of the taxation of the year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer surely admitted that the Unfunded Debt was too great, and it would, therefore, seem to be better policy to apply the money solely to the reduction of that debt, and not to the purchase of Consols in the market. He did not share the Chancellor of the Exchequer's sanguine hopes that he would be able to reduce capital expenditure. While he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on having added £1,000,000 to the Sinking Fund, he did not think he could have done anything else, looking at the position of the Debt and the Sinking Fund. The figures of national expenditure were certainly very disheartening to the economists in the House, whose numbers, he was afraid, were few; and still more disheartening was the expenditure on certain branches in regard to which they could not feel that the nation got value for its money.

For a good deal of the expenditure the country did not get full value. This was particularly the case in regard to education and the Army. In connection with the Army there had been brought forward several schemes, each extremely costly, and the last of which, while showing no diminution in expenditure, had practically disorganised the Regulars, disheartened the Militia, and disgusted the Volunteers. This was a very unfortunate result for any Army scheme to have upon a service founded not upon conscription but upon popular favour and support. One matter upon which the Government might be congratulated was the fact that at last there was some hope of the cessation of expenditure in the wilds of Somaliland. The apparent result of a wise arrangement made by the Italians with the Mullah was that that so-called mad person had been given a large slice of territory, turned into a Potentate, and granted a port. He did not know that this House had ever gone so far as to suggest that the Mullah should be given territory and a port, but they had, at any rate, always contended that terms should be come to and a check put upon these costly and bloody expeditions into Africa. His chief desire in speaking, however, was to emphasise what he regarded as two really serious matters in connection with our national finance at the present moment. The first was the fact that we were not reducing the debt anything like so rapidly as we ought to do, and the other was that our annual expenditure was of such a type and taxation was so heavy that it could not fail very seriously to affect the consuming power and the comforts of the working classes, and also to injure and jeopardise our commercial position in competition with other nations.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said that the Second Reading of the Finance Bill was usually not so much a discussion of the contents of the Bill itself as a part of a general discussion of the financial position of the country. Not unnaturally a considerable amount of attention to-day had been directed to the question of taxation, and so far as he could gather, the general feeling seemed to be that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had acted rightly, so far as he had gone, but that it was desirable that he should go still further in the direction he had taken. In his Budget speech his right hon. friend clearly and distinctly intimated that he would discourage the idea of adding to our National Debt by naval, military, or public works, and the House might rest assured that any assistance they could give in that direction would be welcomed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. So far as the question of debt was concerned it would probably be advisable that he should leave many of the technical and complicated points to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with later on, but he might be permitted to deal with certain matters which came more immediately under his own personal observation.

So far as the Army and Navy were concerned, the important speech of the Prime Minister on Thursday last had doubtless had the effect of bringing more clearly before the country what our obligations were, and if while bearing those obligations in mind it were found possible to reduce the expenditure on the Army and Navy, it would be a result which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would welcome with acclamation. He would remind the House, however, that when such reductions were made they frequently caused considerable inconvenience, and in some cases distress. That being so, he hoped that when the reductions took place and the inevitable dislocation followed—which the Departments concerned would endeavour to make as little onerous as possible—Members would assist by not raising questions concerning this or that district, or this or that particular class of Government servants. In the debate of a year ago he was accused of having lectured the House. It was said that every Financial Secretary had lectured the House and always would do so. Possibly his speech was somewhat open to that charge, but he certainly had no intention of lecturing the House, and it was not his wish to do so to-day. At the same time, with all due respect, he would venture to call attention to two occurrences in the present session. Possibly of all the Estimates, Class I. was the section most capable of being considered in its minutest details. There were many matters dealt with in that class to which it would have been the wish of the House to devote careful and minute inquiry. But the Government were pressed to put down the House of Commons Vote first. Two hours of the afternoon were occupied in a discussion mainly concerned with the comforts and conveniences of Members, and if it had not been for the timely intervention of one of the Members for Islington the whole of the afternoon might have been devoted to that topic. He was not at all sure that he ought not to congratulate the noble Lord who was in charge of the Vote upon the fact that the net result of the debate was a promise to look into the question of telephonic communication between the House of Commons and Westminster Hospital, and into the advisability of providing a swing door in some portion of the House. Speaking as the representative of the Treasury, he thought they got off very cheaply on that occasion. The second debate to which he wished to refer took place on Wednesday last, when he was absolutely alone in endeavouring to press upon the House that what they were doing might create a fresh charge upon the Exchequer. A fair case for inquiry was made out by hon. Members from Ireland in reference to art accommodation in Dublin, but he was certainly surprised at the somewhat vigorous assistance—whether altogether in favour of art or in anticipation of favours to come he could not say—rendered to Irish representatives by hon. Members for Scotch constituencies, and he looked in vain for support from those quarters in which were generally found certain critics of the national expenditure. Whatever the result of the promised inquiry might be, he hoped Irish and Scottish representatives would not be altogether unmindful of the possible dangers arising from extra expenditure.

He wished to put before the House some figures connected with expenditure, and although they would probably fail to satisfy the House, he hoped they might do some good. He would go back ten years, not only because it was convenient, but because it also coincided with that moment which possibly hon. Gentlemen opposite regarded as the inauguration of everything that was bad in expenditure and administration. Omitting the Army and Navy and comparing the total Estimates of the Budget Services for 1895–6 with the Estimates presented this year, there had been an increase during that period of £21,500,000. That increase was made up roughly as follows:—Service of the Debt, £3,000,000; Civil Services, £9,000,000; Postal and Revenue Services, £6,000,000; and Local Taxation Relief, £3,500,000. He would not go at any great length into the details of the figures he had referred to. There were, however, two or three items of interest. For instance, there was an increase on works and buildings of £850,000, and of this total £235,000 was in respect of Revenue Buildings and £210,000 for rates. He thought it only right to point out to the House that much of the increased expenditure for the Revenue Services included the Postal and Telegraph Services, and much of that had been incurred for the convenience of the public. They nevertheless continued to derive considerable income from the Postal Services as a whole. During the last two or three years the expenditure upon public buildings had shown a considerable rise. The reason for this was that in this respect much economy was practised during the war, and it was felt most undesirable that they should continue to diminish this expenditure after the war was over. Obviously they should endeavour to make up those arrears as much as possible, and consequently they had for the last two or three years had to place on the Estimates heavier sums for this purpose. He scarcely liked to venture to hold out any hopes of economy, but he believed that his right hon. friend the Postmaster-General would be able, when the arrears had been caught up, to discontinue this heavy expenditure, or at any rate would not continue it at such a rate. There was another item which had shown an alarming increase during the last ten years, and that was in regard to the rates paid upon Government property, which showed an increase of £210,000. A Question had been asked which implied that there was a chance of still further demands being placed upon the Imperial Exchequer in this respect, but he would advise the House not to make any departure from their present system.

There had been an increase in Class II. of the Estimates of £600,000; it was perfectly well known and admitted that with the continual growth of population they must expect to see the cost of civil administration increased. He was afraid it was not possible to deny that that would always be the case, but the greater part of this increase was due to carrying out those obligations which had been placed upon the various Departments of the State by the action of the House. He did not complain of this, and he had no right to complain. Great improvement had been made in regard to the supervision of dangerous occupations under the Local Government Board, the Board of Trade, and the Home Office, but they had had to appoint a number of additional inspectors to deal with very important matters concerning the lives of the people, conditions of labour, and the actual conditions of employment of almost every class of the community. If there was that continuous and continual desire expressed on the floor of the House and constant pressure put upon the heads of Departments that still more should be done in those directions, then it was almost impossible to venture to hope for any reduction in expenditure upon those heads. He did not complain of the action of the House in those matters, because he believed that such expenditure was justified; but when they insisted that there should be more inspection, and that more protection should be given in those various directions, then they were not justified in complaining when they had to pay for those services.

With regard to the total increase in the cost of the Civil Services, during the ten years under review more than two-thirds of the total increase was due to education. The expenditure upon Class IV. during the year 1895–6 was £10,250,000. In the year 1905–6 this expenditure had been estimated at over £16,250,000, and of the whole of that increase the Education Vote was responsible for £5,963,000, or practically the whole of the increase. He was aware that he was now raising questions which had been bitterly fought out upon the floor of this House, but he had never yet heard that there was any likelihood of suggestions being made to diminish the contribution which they were now making towards education. The tendency was rather in the direction that the State should bear still further expenditure in regard to education. He did not know whether the House fully realised the burden which education was now placing upon the taxpayers of this country, but at the present moment, as he had already stated, the direct tendency was in the direction of attempting to place a still bigger share of the burden of education upon the Imperial Exchequer rather than upon the local authorities. He wished to remind the House that in consequence of the generally expressed feeling both inside and outside of the House of Commons the Chancellor of the Exchequer had increased the grants to the University colleges to £100,000. That was a Vote which would probably come up for discussion, for there were several hon. and right hon. Gentlemen anxious to have that Vote put down for consideration, as they desired to discuss it on broad principles.

He thought it would perhaps be a source of satisfaction to the House if he stated that he thought they were beginning to see signs of the various protectorates demanding less assistance from the Imperial Exchequer than they had in the past, and he hoped that the day was not very far distant when they would be self-supporting. In the statement he had made he had not taken into account the benefits which those Protectorates abroad might confer upon British trade and commerce as a whole; the great interest which had lately been developed in Lancashire with reference to certain of those protectorates was well known and admitted by all, and although they had in times past incurred very heavy expenditure in many of these directions, he thought they were now able to show some justification for their policy in that respect.

Referring to the Revenue Departments, he said that the cost of the Customs and the Inland Revenue had increased in ten years by £468,000, but in the meantime the revenue had increased by more than £36,000,000. He thought, therefore, he was justified in saying that the additional cost was most minute. He knew that in many quarters of the House, and also outside, there had been a strong feeling that the conditions in the Departments of Customs and Inland Revenue were not fair and that they required consideration. He knew how much depended on the smooth working of those Departments in connection with the collection of the very large amounts which passed through their hands. Any representations made to him would, of course, receive at his hand, as they had always received at the hands of his predecessors, the most careful and the most thorough investigation. He wished with all respect to place before the House a consideration which he thought they were sometimes inclined to overlook. The country was fortunate in these services in possessing men who desired to do their work, and who did it admirably. At the same time the matter must be regarded as one of business, and the remuneration paid to the staff must be regarded not so much in respect of what was due to the individuals themselves, but as to what ought properly to be paid for the work which had to be done. He should not like to state absolutely, but he could not help feeling that in certain of the Departments the conditions which had hitherto prevailed had been the means of attracting to those services individuals who, possibly in many respects were rather too good for the work which they had to do. While they were fortunate in having the services of those men, he thought he could at the same time without fear of contradiction lay down as a principle that in that House they must have the scale of remuneration on the actual class of the work that had to be done. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen who had interested and were interesting themselves in these matters that they should bear this consideration in view. No doubt there would be further opportunities during the session for the discussion of these matters more in detail. He should like to take this opportunity of thanking many hon. Members for their courtesy in bringing these matters before him without raising them in a controversial way in the House. He thought these matters were far better settled outside the House.

The only other matter to which he wished to call attention was the Post Office. In the period of review the Post Office Votes had increased by £5,787,000, while the postal and telegraph revenue had increased by £6,330,000. There was thus still a net slight additional revenue derived from the Post Office. But there again the expenditure had been considerably increased by concessions which had recently been made to Post Office employees and which he understood were still likely to be the subject of further consideration when brought before the House. In the course of the past ten years the larger portion of the increase of £21,000,000 in the Civil Service expenditure had been due to the Postal and Telegraph Services, which had at the same time been the means of increasing the revenue of the country by a still larger proportion. That increased expenditure had been incurred to carry out the policy which had been adopted by the House.

There were two considerations which they ought to bear in mind in judging whether this expenditure was necessary or not. It was very easy to look at totals and make comparisons with the figures of five, ten, or twenty years ago, and then say that the expenditure had gone up, but the two questions which he should ask were, first: Is the country able and willing to bear the burden? and, second: Are we getting value for our money? On hardly any occasion had the debates in the House tended to show that the country had been unable to bear the burden, or that the people had been unwilling to make the sacrifices they had been called upon to make. He did not suppose the present House of Commons would determine, but if any future House of Commons should determine that economy was the sole object of its existence, and should be content with what might be called the barest necessities of government, it would be perfectly possible and easy for any Cabinet or Chancellor of the Exchequer to make very serious reductions in expenditure. Nothing was easier than by a stroke of the pen to take off grants of one kind and another. He had seen opportunities of making very drastic and considerable reductions in the amounts given to societies which came under the head of scientific investigation. He was bound to say that at the present moment there was nothing filled the Treasury with greater alarm than the approach of men of science and men of art. If necessary very serious and far-reaching reductions, almost with the stroke of the pen, could be made, but he should be very much surprised if for a long time to come the House of Commons were to adopt a policy of that nature. If the Government attempted to do so he was bound to say that he should not be envious of those who were responsible for such a policy. He thought he could with justification claim that although the expenditure was heavy—he did not deny that the expenditure was heavy—there was nothing to prove that the country was not able to bear the burden, or that we were not getting value for our money.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) congratulated the hon. Gentleman on the review he had given of certain branches of expenditure which might otherwise have been overlooked. Having had some little experience in meeting the heads of the Customs during the past few years he could heartily second the remarks of the hon. Gentleman in regard to the excellent services rendered by them. He did not think the House really appreciated the great efforts made at the Custom House, and also by the Inland Revenue Department to make the duties of these offices work smoothly with the traders of the country, who were in a great measure dependent on the facilities they gave. The testimony borne by the hon. Gentleman to the excellent manner in which their duties were discharged were fully deserved.

The hon. Gentleman had told those who had been grumbling at the national expenditure that so far as the Civil Service was concerned there had only been an increase in ten years of £21,500,000. Of that sum £9,000,000 might be traced to questions over which the Revenue Departments had no control whatever, and £3,000,000 were for the service of the Debt. The Debt had been increased by the Imperial statesmen who had adopted such a high-flying policy in recent years. The £6,000,000 at the Post Office was really not an increase of expenditure at all. It had proved to be profitable outlay. If they took off these £9,000,000 they found that there had only been an increase of about £12,000,000 on the Civil Service expenditure. Of the £12,000,000 there might be traced to education £6,000,000. The hon. Gentleman had said that no one had dared to object to the expenditure on education. He supposed the hon. Gentleman did not take notice of the remarks which a humble individual like himself made from time to time. He did not think there was anything sacred in the expenditure on education. There was no connection between a good and effective system of education and the huge expenditure which had been made upon education in the extravagant period they were passing through. The expenditure on education required to be surveyed as closely as any other branch of expenditure. There were six Education Acts and it was not at all certain that our system of national education was improved according to the increased expenditure upon it.

The hon. Member opposite had said that the nation was quite satisfied with the present condition of affairs, but that if expenditure was to be reduced that might be done by striking off some of the grants to Universities. That would not be at all easy to do without causing great inconvenience. It was when the grants were being given that care should be exercised, because the cruelty arose from setting up expenditure in the first instance which the country really did not want. He quite agreed with reducing expenditure which would cause as little suffering as possible. That might be accomplished not by reducing the Government establishments but by reducing the amount of work done in outside yards. The Government itself was to a large extent responsible for the men whom it employed, and there should not be the amount of fluctuation of employment that had sometimes been the case and which had caused much suffering. The hon. Gentleman had asked whether the country was satisfied that for this expenditure good value was got for the money, and had answered that the country was satisfied. He had been all over the country at elections, and found the greatest dissatisfaction with the current extravagant expenditure; and he ventured to say that no Government ever made a greater mistake than in imagining the country was satisfied. The country was thoroughly dissatisfied, and was resolved on the reduction of expenditure. Then, as to the country getting value for its money, look at the Return just issued, which showed that £248,000 worth of stores were destroyed in South Africa, and at all the revelations made connected with the war. Again, millions had been wasted on the fortifications of London. The Prime Minister himself had admitted that the other day; and his only excuse was that men were human, and liable to err. What value were we getting for the stones in the forts which were rotting on the Surrey Hills?

As to the extraordinary growth of the public debt, he joined with those who protested against the distinction which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had drawn between the various kinds of debt. What was the use of speaking of dead-weight debt, and unfunded debt and capital liability debt? All these accounts were kept open to bamboozle the House and puzzle the country. If hon. Members would only look at the black figures in the Annual Return of debt there would be much less confusion. He was glad that there had been no attempt to introduce a Party bias into this debate so far, unless it might have been by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, who gave credit to the Liberals for what they had done to reduce the national indebtedness in former times. The Return showed that the total amount of the Unfunded Debt when the Liberals were in power was £10,000,000, while to-day it was £72,000,000. That was what had been done by a Tory Government in ten years. The capital liability debt was only £4,000,000 ten years ago; now it amounted to £42,000,000. That was a bad record for those responsible for the finances of the country in the meantime. For the past six years the Debt had been steadily increasing with the exception of last year, when there was a reduction of £3,000,000; but that was accounted for by the money received from the Transvaal. No attempt had been made to see that the country paid its way. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a statement in which there was an adumbration as to what would take place next year. He believed that both this year and next the indebtedness of the nation would continue to rise. That was a most serious condition of affairs which no Government had ever neglected until the present; and unless the Government grappled with the difficulties of finance they ought to make way for another which would do so. Of course this was a matter which reflected more on previous Chancellors of the Exchequer than the hon. Gentleman now on the Treasury Bench.

He wished to call attention to the way in which the growth of the Debt had been excused in debate in recent years. He held in his hand the last three Budget speeches made by the respective Chancellors of the Exchequer. The first was by the right hon. Member for Croydon. In dealing with the Debt the right hon. Gentleman made out a splendid case for reduction of debt and for economy of expenditure. He said that the Sinking Fund would be nearly £7,000,000 more, and went on to show that the Sinking Fund presented a larger proportion to the whole debt of the country than in any previous year; and he calculated that by March, 1908, it would amount to nearly £9,000,000 more. And the right hon. Gentleman wound up by saying that if the Debt was not added to, the whole charge for this gigantic debt would be swept away in fifty years. Now, not a penny of that debt had been reduced. It was larger now than when the right hon. Gentleman spoke. Then the present Chancellor of the Exchequer a year ago in his financial statement said that the Debt would be reduced in the course of the year by £5,600,000, but the Debt had not been reduced at all, as was shown by the black figures in the Return issued the day before. This year the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that there had been a total reduction of the dead-weight debt in the course of twelve months to the amount of £7,500,000. There would, however, not be a penny of reduction, but £2,000,000 would be added. All this language about reduction of debt ought to be excluded from Budget speeches if there was to be no reduction at all.

He wanted to explain to the House how the nation was puzzled, if not disgusted. At the beginning of the session speeches were made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but they had great difficulty in finding out what the borrowings would amount to on the capital account. All they now knew was that there would be no real reduction of debt this year. The matter was becoming very serious and he thought it was time some step was taken. What was the reason that better control could not be obtained by the House over the finances of the nation? He thought that in the first place the responsibility rested with the Treasury and mainly with the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. He must say, however, that the position of the Treasury among the Departments of the State was not what it used to be a few years ago. He would venture to remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he was not a mere cashier to find the money for his colleagues' extravagant projects. It was not his duty to go round the Departments, cap in hand, as it were, and say, "What do you want?" It was his business to keep down the expenditure of the country. The Treasury had been in years gone by the most autocratic controller of every Department, and it had been given this control in order that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might exercise it. He should not invite claims, but should inform the Departments that there was the necessity for rigid economy, and enforce it by preparing the Estimates in a way which the nation could afford. In the past they had had Chancellors of the Exchequer who recognised that that was the reason for the peculiar constitution of the Treasury. That was why it could go into all the other Departments, do what it liked, and exercise a firm control. Therefore he thought the Treasury ought to make itself the mouthpiece of the sentiment of economy so as to check extravagant Votes. He was willing to admit that the country had had an extravagant fit; at the time of the war he had protested against the expenditure, but at that time those who did so were in a minority. Now, however, they were in a majority and everybody thought with them. Every improvement in the price of the Funds seemed now to pass away rapidly. At the time the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Budget things looked better in the City and Consols went up two or three points. He did not know whether it was the consequence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's loan, but now things had got gloomy again. Consols were down, high-class securities had declined in value, and a spirit of fear and caution prevailed, the same as they had had to deal with in former times. The reason was that the nation was not satisfied that we were meeting our obligations.

The question was, How were we to get back into a better state of affairs? There was only one answer that he could give to that question, and that was that expenditure must be reduced to a degree of which he recognised no sign on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the other members of the Government up to the present time. He was glad that there had been some reduction in the Navy, but it was not, in his opinion, sufficient. He thought the naval expenditure should be reduced down to £25,000,000, and that there should be a corresponding reduction in the Army Estimates. There was one aspect in Army expenditure which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might deal with. That was the huge expenditure upon our Colonies and upon foreign countries. In Egypt quite unnecessarily large amounts were paid. It was true that Egypt paid us £100,000 for military services. Why, then, should not the expenditure be restricted to that amount? The military cost in regard to Malta was £800,000, and he did not see why that should not be reduced to £250,000. The garrisons abroad in other places might, he considered, be reduced by half the amount which they at present cost? There were £6,000,000 spent in this way, and in his judgment the sum could be reduced to £2,500,000 or £3,000,000. He also thought they ought to listen to the appeals which the Secretary of the Treasury had made to them, and that they ought to endeavour, without causing any suffering to anyone, to assist the reduction of the national expenditure by declining to force new enterprises upon the Government. The moral of this story lay in the fact that the Debt was not being reduced. How could the Government say that the nation was going on well if it was not paying its debts? He observed that the Prime Minister, when he spoke about national defence, never spoke about our greatest national defence, that was the feeling of the capacity we had for, and our ability to incur, large expenditure if necessary. The Government by their policy had driven this country out of the position that it had occupied in those respects, and he trusted that if the Administration meant to remain in office much longer it would try to pick up some of the good traditions of its predecessors.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he confessed that as he listened to the most interesting speech of the Prime Minister he was quite unable to reconcile his statement with the demands which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made upon the taxpayer, and ever since in thinking of this subject he had been continually saying to himself: What is the necessity for the British taxpayer to bear the great burden which is put upon his back. He wanted to address the House upon that speech of the Prime Minister in the hope of getting from the Chancellor of the Exchequer some explanation of the apparent discrepancy between the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury and the clauses of the Finance Bill. The statement made by the Prime Minister was not a mere speech upon a large national position. It was a statement arrived at after taking the advice of the greatest and best naval and military experts which the country possessed, and it represented the deliberate policy of the British Government upon the subject of national defence, a policy known to and adopted by every member of the present Cabinet, and announced to the nation and to the world at large as the fixed determination of the British Government. One of the most striking parts of that declaration dealt with the impossibility of the invasion of this country. That subject was not new to the House of Commons because it had been dwelt upon by the Secretary of State for War in proposing the Army Estimates, but it was stated, of course, by the Prime Minister with much greater authority and much greater weight. And he supposed that they might take it as the deliberate opinion of the British Government, with access to all the expert advice and all the knowledge which was possessed by the Members of the House or by the nation at large, that they might be satisfied that the country could not be invaded. The view which was put before the country by the Government twenty years ago in the Army Estimates was that it was supposed to be necessary to make provision for some possibility at least of the invasion of this country, and therefore the discovery and the determination that such an invasion was impossible ought to lead to a reduction of Army expenditure from that expenditure which they all thought and which the Government told them was essential twenty years ago.

The second remarkable statement made by the Prime Minister was one made in direct contradiction to what had previously been stated to Parliament by the Secretary of State for War when that right hon. Gentleman was defending the increase of Army expenditure notwithstanding the opinion which he and the Government had formed as to the impossibility of invasion. The Secretary of State for War based his statement upon the necessity of being ready immediately to defend the frontiers of India against possible incursions by some other Power. He mentioned Russia, which, of course, was the only Power which could attack us in that part of the world. He had listened to the statement of the Secretary of State for War with very great astonishment because twenty years ago he had the honour of holding the office of Under-Secretary for India, and he was quite familiar with the military opinion on the defence of the frontiers of India which then prevailed. He did not like to intervene in the debate because he thought he might make a fool of himself, and that matters might have been discovered in recent years which changed the situation, or that military opinion had altered, and that if he were to attack the Secretary of State for War on the subject he ran the risk of placing himself in the position of an ignorant Member of Parliament who was not qualified to speak on the subject. But what was his amazement when the Prime Minister not only contradicted the statement of the Minister for War, but actually announced as the fixed, the stable policy of the British Government the opinion held by military authorities twenty years ago, namely, that it was impossible for Russia or any other Power to make an attack upon the Indian frontier until they had constructed railways through Afghanistan. Between the two Empires there was the wild and inhospitable country of Afghanistan, and no force could cross to attack the Indian frontier unless railways were first made in that country. The Ameer in former days was very reluctant to allow railways to be made. At one time there was a proposal to construct a railway to Kandahar, but it was abandoned because Abdurrahman, a very wise ruler, objected to it. On the other hand there was no reason to suppose that Afghanistan would be more complaisant to Russia. Russia could not make the railway to Herat without incurring the deadly hostility of Afghanistan. The moral which the Prime Minister drew was that there was no hurry at the present moment about the advance on the Indian frontier, and that there was no need this year to get up a great force in order to reinforce the troops on the frontier of India.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Does the right hon. Gentleman remember the Prime Minister's statement as to the reinforcements which would be required in the first year of a war?

SIR JOHN GORST said he quite remembered the Prime Minister's words, but he did not think that Russia for many years to come would think of making an attack upon India. They did not know how long the present war might go on, but no attack on the part of Russia, to whom he did not impute any intention to make one, could be made until the present struggle was over and until Russia had somewhat recovered its finances and its strength after the terrible conflict in which she was at present engaged. Under those circumstances there was no hurry to make preparations for a struggle on the North-West Frontier of India, and he asked whether, if that was so, there really was any necessity for this increased military expenditure? Just contrast the condition of things twenty years ago and the condition of things now. Twenty years ago we thought that we were liable to invasion and had to make some provision against it. We also held the same views upon the protection of the Indian frontier that occurred in the Prime Minister's statement. Now, therefore, when we were in consequence of those views relieved from the necessity of keeping an Army at home in order to protect our country, our military expenditure was enormously greater than it was twenty years ago. We had the largest military expenditure of any nation in the world, except Russia. If any steps were to be taken against our great dependency of India they could not be initiated until preliminary works had been completed which it would take years to construct. In view of these facts what he wanted the Chancellor of the Exchequer to tell them was on what ground, after the Defence Committee had come to the conclusions which were announced last week, the expenditure on the Army had been increased. He quite agreed that it was necessary for us to keep a great and powerful Fleet, but if it was possible to diminish the expenditure on that Fleet during the current year by a sum of not less than £3,500,000, when they turned to the Army he should have thought that there would have been a still greater reduction there because there economy would appear to be more easy than in the Navy. But they found that so far from there being a decrease there was actually an increase in Army expenditure, and as a humble ratepayer he could not conceive why after the statement made by the Government, after consultation with the Imperial Committee of Defence, there should be an increase on the Army, which was defended by the War Minister on grounds which were diametrically opposed to the statement of the Prime Minister.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had, as a conspicuous Member on the Ministerial side of the House, together with the hon. Member for King's Lynn, drawn attention to the necessity for a great reduction of expenditure, especially as regarded the Army. This debate, as he had said on other occasions during the last year or two, was rather conspicuous for the absence of financial experts. Of course Sir William Harcourt was no longer with them, but they had the right hon. Member for Croydon, who had just left the House, and his predecessor the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, who year in and year out constantly complained of the growing weight of expenditure. The latter right hon. Gentleman had, however, never insisted upon his wishes being carried into effect but he was very sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not contributed to this debate, any more than the other experts had, any suggestion of how the enormous burdens of of this country might be diminished. As to the speech of the Secretary for the Treasury, although it was perfectly true that he suggested one or two comparatively small economies, and although he urged with great propriety how wrong it was for Members of Parliament to put pressure on behalf of their constitutents against any reduction of public works or expenditure, yet he did not suggest any way by which that expenditure might be diminished and he did not express any wish that it should be diminished. The hon. Gentleman said that the country was perfectly able to bear the weight of the expenditure and perfectly willing to do so, and if they were to look upon the hon. Gentleman as an exponent of the policy of the Government it was manifest that there was no desire on their part to reduce this burden, and that there was no necessity either for themselves or any other Government to undertake that task. If that was their opinion all he could say was that they were living in a fool's paradise; he believed that there was a very strong feeling amongst people of all shades of political opinion that it was impossible with safety to go on at the present rate of expenditure, and that some method of reduction would have to be found or else the country would get into serious difficulty. If the experts did not assist them he supposed that men of business and common-sense might be allowed to offer a few remarks as to the way in which expenditure might be reduced.

The hon. Member for King's Lynn had pointed out, and his observations had been endorsed more than once by the findings of the Committee, that a good deal might be done by a more adequate control by the House of Commons over the expenditure of the country. It was impossible to pretend that they had any control now; they had accounts put before them in a form which no business firm would tolerate for a moment. When discussions arose with reference to finance he distrusted the use of expressions such as "dead-weight debt," which really concealed the facts of the case, although he did not accuse the Chancellor of the Exchequer of wishing to do so. Whatever their meaning they only had the effect of concealing from the House and the public the real extent of the burdens of the country. As a matter of fact the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech had never explained that last year the total liabilities of the country had been increased instead of diminished, notwithstanding the fact that so many millions a year out of the Sinking Fund was paid for the service of the National Debt. There ought to be clearer accounts, and he thought there ought also to be an examination in Committee of the particulars of the Estimates as was recommended by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. Such a Committee, however, should not merely sit and take one class of Estimate each year, but there should be a constant and regular service of Members all through the year for the purpose of examining the Estimates and of calling persons before them to explain them. He believed that a great deal might be done in that way. But the House should never lose sight of the fact that, after all, policy governed expenditure, and unless there was a change of policy there would never be any substantial diminution of expenditure.

There were three great heads of expenditure. According to the Annual Return of Revenue and Expenditure issued in July last, during the ten years preceding that Return, Civil Service Estimates increased by about 45 per cent., a great part of which was for education. He was not at all satisfied that considerable reductions might not be made in the Civil Service Estimates, to which alone the Secretary to the Treasury referred that afternoon. Then came the service of the National Debt, which had increased from £25,000,000 to £28,750,000, an increase of 15 per cent. due to the enormous increase in the National Debt itself. The third head was naval and military expenditure, which had gone up from £35,000,000 to £71,000,000, an increase of more than 100 per cent. That £71,000,000 did not at all represent the present naval and military expenditure, as was shown in the admirable pamphlet of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, but he was content to take the figure given in the Treasury Return, from which it appeared that there had been an increase of over 100 per cent. in ten years. That was the cause of the expenditure, and until they were prepared to cut down those Estimates courageously and thoroughly there would never be any great improvement in the finances of the country. In 1895 the home Army consisted of 116,000 men; this year 156,000 had been voted. The force in India remained substantially the same, but the colonial forces had increased from 37,000 to 61,000. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University had pointed out with unanswerable force, this increase in expenditure was wholly inconsistent with the Prime Minister's recent speech on Imperial Defence. Personally, he was not sure that the Prime Minister did not take too sanguine a view as to the actual number of men necessary to resist invasion, but if his estimate was anything like accurate it was obvious that we were maintaining a large force at home not for our own protection, but exclusively for parts of the Empire which, with the exception of India, provided very little for themselves.

So, too, in regard to the Navy. The Navy was required in its present strength not for our own defence, but mainly for the defence of outlying parts of the British dominions, and also for the defence of the commerce common to us and to them, and of which one-fourth had no direct relation with the United Kingdom at all, but was simply either intercolonial or between the Colonies and foreign countries. And yet, although this was the case, the whole of the burden was being placed upon the shoulders of the British taxpayer. He desired to see that burden removed, first, in the interest and for the protection of our own people, and, secondly, because he was satisfied, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stated at the Colonial Conference, that the people of this country would not be content indefinitely to continue to bear the whole of that burden. It would disgust them with the great inheritance into which they had come, and the more they were caused to suffer real privation and sacrifice in the matter of health and in other respects, the zeal for Imperial greatness would wane instead of wax. He submitted that the policy of the country ought to be altered, and that the self-governing Colonies and other dependencies should do more than at present to provide for their own protection. There were places such as Malta, Gibraltar, Hong-Kong, and Egypt from which the garrison could not be wholly withdrawn, but he felt that it was incumbent upon the Government to reduce the number of British garrisons maintained in Colonies and dependencies of the Crown to the scale which obtained ten years ago. It was more difficult to suggest reductions in the Navy than in the Army. A reduction, however, had been this year undertaken, and he thought that that policy ought to be still further continued. He held it to be the duty of the Government to place itself in communication with other Powers with a view to securing some contemporaneous reduction or cessation in new building by common consent. There was one argument which might be used very effectively. The United States of America had always advocated that private property at sea should be exempt from capture, and if that proposal were agreed to one of the greatest inducements to foreign nations to maintain large navies would disappear. To this country, owing to its position, a large Navy was indispensable, but for them the necessity was not so great except for the purpose of protecting their commerce. It would not be in order to discuss that matter more fully, but the United States had always advocated that policy, and at different times it had received the support of Russia, Austria, Prussia, Italy, and practically every considerable Power in the world except France and Great Britain. The suggestion was now being urged with great force by President Roosevelt. In any case the proposal deserved full consideration, and might lead to a large simultaneous reduction of armaments among the nations of Europe. It was the duty of the House constantly to urge the necessity for reductions in expenditure, and he was confident that although proposals now put forward might not meet with general acceptance, yet in any new Parliament, no matter what its political complexion might be, nothing would be more strongly insisted upon than a reduction of the burdens borne by the people of this country.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) said the hon. and learned Member opposite had suggested that Members of experience should contribute their views as to the best method for checking the ever-increasing national expenditure, which everybody in the House regarded with apprehension. In response to that invitation he would venture to make a suggestion to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. After long experience of the modern system of finance in India, and of the working of our own financial system as a member of the Cabinet, he unhesitatingly said that the machinery which the Secretary of State and the Viceroy of India had at their command was far more effectual in supervising and checking expenditure than the machinery at the disposal of the financial authorities in this country. He remembered the time when the most gloomy anticipations were indulged in as to the future of Indian finance; reference was made to the absence of representative people from the Government of India, and to the fact that military men were strongly represented, and it was confidently prophesied that expenditure would rapidly increase beyond the capacity of the Indian Exchequer to bear it. It was a curious thing that during the past ten years India, notwithstanding all its difficulties, had been able continuously to reduce its taxation, while in this country, the home of representative institutions, taxation had been continuously increased. In India the Secretary of State and the Viceroy had two very efficient instruments for supervising and checking expenditure. The first was the Finance Council, which was always in session, and had to do with all parts of expenditure, and was therefore able to give an opinion upon any fresh proposals for expenditure; the second was the fact that in the Government of India itself practically all the members were throughly acquainted with their work, and the Viceroy had at his disposal a Committee which was always able thoroughly to investigate proposals for fresh expenditure and to knock off any existing expenditure which might be unnecessary. There was no machinery of that kind in this country.

The hon. and learned Member opposite had said that policy regulated expenditure. But the curious feature of the Estimates of this year was that in the admirable expositions of naval and military policy which had been given by the Prime Minister the views put forward, which were excellent in themselves, were not new. The views with regard to the possibility of invasion were those which had been held by the Admiralty for several years, while the views as to the possible invasion of India were those which for many years past the Government of India had held. Therefore, the real importance of his right hon. friend's speech was that it clearly laid down that in the opinion of the Government the antagonistic views of the War Office, the Admiralty, and the India Office had come up for consideration, and that a decision had been given by the Government in favour of the views of the Admiralty and the India Office. If it were so he agreed that it was the duty of the Government—he did not say at once—to regulate their Estimates according to that policy. It might fairly be said that the Army Estimates of the present year were not in accordance with the policy laid down by the Prime Minister.

What were the checks on expenditure? The first was the House of Commons, the second the Cabinet, and the third the Treasury. Everybody must admit that the House of Commons could not effectively control expenditure. He believed there was not an occasion on which the House had investigated questions affecting expenditure when their recommendations had not tended rather to increase than decrease expenditure. It was also the fact that the more time given to the discussion of Supply the more proposals emanated from both sides for further expenditure. He thought, therefore, the House of Commons could not be looked upon as being likely to afford effective machinery for checking expenditure in future. As to the Cabinet, it had largely increased in numbers and the individual work of its members had enormously increased. This had been recognised by the Prime Minister in the constitution of the Committee of Defence, which had practically taken away from the Cabinet the whole control of naval and military questions. Therefore, in future, there would be this compact body of members of the Cabinet and of persons interested in pressing on naval and military expenditure to be dealt with. With regard to the Treasury, he did not think the old methods by which they checked expenditure were for the public benefit. For so many years the head of the Government had been either Chancellor of the Exchequer or Prime Minister that the Treasury came to regard themselves, not as a Department of the Government but as the Government itself, and they addressed other Departments in that tone. They exercised their authority well but not wisely. Twenty years ago we were in a deplorable condition, when a large number of forts were built and there were no guns to put in them, when we had ships that had guns but no ammunition, mainly due to the Treasury being all-powerful. Since then the Treasury had been deposed from this position. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, of course, still had a certain power of checking expenditure, but if he objected to a certain item, and was overruled, it was hardly reasonable to expect him to resign on some small detail if he was interested in the other portions of the policy of the Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have behind him, inside the Cabinet, someone who would look impartially at the question from a financial point of view, and use his influence against the pressure brought to bear for the increase of Army and Navy expenditure.

What he suggested was that the possibility should be considered of forming out of the Cabinet something like a permanent Finance Committee with a permanent secretary on the same lines as the Defence Committee. Let the House consider what an advantage that would be. Supposing there were a change of Government. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite had been out of office for practically twenty years. How could they possibly control expenditure when they had really had no previous experience? But if there were a Committee of Finance such as he had described, with a permanent secretary, they would have all the information relative to past expenditure at hand, and he believed that future Chancellors of the Exchequer would find in such a Committee an effective instrument for supervising and overhauling expenditure. What really was wanted was not so much to stop new expenditure as to cut off old expenditure which fresh expenditure had rendered really unnecessary. He had read with much interest the Budget speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; his right hon. friend's Budget appeared to give general satisfaction; he evidently earnestly hoped for economies, and, whilst wishing to maintain the efficiency of the fighting services, he was evidently desirous that fresh burdens should not be added to the existing taxation. He sympathised with his right hon. friend in those aspirations, and he had ventured to put forward these suggestions knowing that such a Committee had been of immense benefit to the Indian Government, and in the belief that the establishment of some such similar institution associated with the Cabinet might yield equal advantages to our own system of finance.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said the noble Lord opposite and the Member for Cambridge University had made it abundantly clear that the speech of the Prime Minister was inconsistent with the proposals contained in the Army Estimates for the year, and he could only hope that those right hon. Gentlemen would repeat their speeches when the salary of the Secretary of State for War came up for consideration. As to the desirability of establishing a Finance Committee, that was probably a point upon which only an ex-Cabinet Minister could speak with advantage, but it certainly seemed most desirable that if the Cabinet was to be oppressed by the Defence Committee there should be support given to it by the co-existence of a Finance Committee. He thought that some of the criticisms of Treasury terminology were a little unreasonable. The National Debt was primarily divided into two parts, the first of which fell within the fixed debt-charge and the second of which was outside the fixed debt-charge, and it was only reasonable that there should be two separate names for those two portions of the Debt. The first part was divided into three heads. First there was the Funded Debt in regard to which the State was not under obligation to repay the capital sum at any particular date. Next there was the Unfunded Debt as to which the State was under obligation to repay the capital sum at a particular date. Thirdly, there was the debt which was neither funded nor unfunded in respect of terminable annuities. These were the names given to them by the Treasury. The names given to them by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer were the dead-weight debt and capital liabilities. He would suggest that the customary names for these two classes should be the Consolidated Debt, that was the debt provided for under the consolidated services; and secondly the Supply Debt, that debt which was met out of the Supply services. The use of these names would, he thought, very much simplify matters, and would do away with the undoubted slight misrepresentation which was maintained in the use of the term capital liabilities, which was applied to the debt outside the fixed debt-charge.

It seemed perhaps a little unreasonable to criticise the present Chancellor of the Exchequer on this Finance Bill on the ground of the inadequate provision for the Sinking Fund. The right hon. Gentleman had, after all, given £1,000,000 more than was given by his predecessor. Of the two the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon was the much worse offender. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon came to settle the fixed debt-charge he actually reduced the provision for the Debt by £500,000. The ordinary liability was £23,000,000, and the liability in respect of the war debt was £4,500,000, making together £27,500,000. The right hon. Gentleman fixed the charge at £27,000,000, and he justified that on the ground that he was getting £30,000,000 from the Transvaal. Hon. Members warned him that

that hope might not be realised. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer had increased the amount of the fixed debt-charge by £1,000,000, but that amount was not nearly sufficient. In the first place we had not received the Transvaal money, and in the second place we had increased our liabilities in the course of the last two years. We had nominally increased the amount by £2,000,000, and we had added to our assets by increaing the balances to the extent of £800,000. In order to get that total we had used up assets of £7,000,000 in two sums of £3,000,000 each, and £1,000,000 from the unclaimed dividend fund, so that while we had on the one hand improved our position to the extent of £2,800,000, on the other hand we had gone back to the extent of £7,000,000. On balance, therefore, we had not paid our way during the last two years by over £4,000,000. Was it reasonable that with this huge debt we should not make more ample provision for the Sinking Fund so that we should at least pay our way?

What was the principle on which we ought to proceed in settling the amount of the fixed debt-charge? Speaking in Committee last month the Chancellor of the Exchequer laid down two guiding factors which ought to determine the amount of the fixed debt-charge—What was the total amount we set by for the Sinking Fund? and did that amount bear as good a proportion to the total Debt as it bore in preceding years? He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had set down a satisfactory principle upon which we should be guided. Historically his principle was inaccurate. Previous Chancellors of the Exchequer until the latter days of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had not been guided by that principle at all. Previous Chancellors of the Exchequer had always looked to the ability of the taxpayer to bear the burden. In 1875, when Sir Stafford Northcote proposed the original fixed debt-charge, he settled it at £28,000,000, in spite of our having only at that date a revenue of £77,000,000. It was true that the Sinking Fund bore the proportion to the total debt of ·53 per cent., but year by year as the ability of the taxpayer became greater the proportion of the Sinking Fund to the total debt increased up to the time of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when the figure of ·53 had actually doubled. The proportion of the Sinking Fund to the total debt stood then at over 1 per cent. Why should the Sinking Fund increase suddenly have been stopped? As the nation had got richer we had year by year paid off a larger proportion of our existing debt. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol stopped this increase, because, among other reasons, we were paying off debt by the purchase of Consols in the market at £110, £112, and £114 for every £100 extinguished. The right hon. Gentleman showed the Committee at that time that £20,000,000 of Consols had been repurchased at a cost to the nation of £2,000,000 above the par value, and he said with a certain amount of reason that the taxpayers would not go on increasing the Sinking Fund if they had to repurchase Consols at an exaggerated premium. On that basis he reduced the total amount of the fixed debt-charge at the time. How did the position stand now? Consols were at about 90, and now was the moment for a return to the old days when year by year the proportion of the Sinking Fund to the total debt was an increasing figure. When Sir Stafford Northcote put the fixed debt-charge at £28,000,000 the total revenue was £77,000,000, and the total debt was £766,000,000. Now, when the debt was about equal, and the revenue £152,000,000, it appeared to him that the Sinking Fund was not so large as it ought to be.

Referring to the increasing amount which was raised by loans, and which increased what were called our capital liabilities, the hon. Gentleman said that the additional loans for this year were to be £8,000,000, and in future years the additional loans which were already authorised would amount to £14,000,000. How was that going to tell upon the taxpayers in future years? They would have to meet on the Estimates no less than £3,000,000 to cover the interest and Sinking Fund on these capital liabilities. Was the future taxpayer to go on borrowing, or was he to discontinue that policy and meet capital expenditure out of the capital of the year. The future taxpayer would have to find an additional £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 to cover the capital expenditure of our borrowing in addition to the £3,000,000 for interest and Sinking Fund. Was it reasonable to the future taxpayer that that burden should be put upon him without our making a strong effort to take advantage of the favourable opportunity we had now to reduce the total amount of the dead-weight debt.

He asked the House to consider the costliness of the present system. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to go to the market during the current year to borrow no less than £40,000,000. Part of this would be necessary for the renewal of Treasury bills and Exchequer bonds, and part of it on account of the Irish Land Loan. The right hon. Gentleman borrowed last year at an average of £3 4s. 4d. per cent., so that for the £40,000,000 which he was going to borrow in the course of the year he would have to pay interest presumably at the same rate. If we could get Consols back again to par our credit would stand at 2½ per cent., and we should save 14s. per cent. on the £40,000,000 we had to borrow. That was to say, by the mere restoration of our credit we should save £280,000 a year on the additional amount which we now had to pay for the sums we had to borrow. It was surely very unwise finance for us not to make the most strenuous effort to restore Consols to par. He admitted that when Consols were at par in the open market we should not buy them on as advantageous terms as we could now, but the buying of Consols cheap did not repay us for the additional amount which we had to pay in interest. He would point out to the Secretary to the Treasury that last year Consols were bought to the amount of £1,116,000 at the price of 88·86. That was to say, we bought Consols in the market at the price which gave a return on the investment of £2 16s. 3d. per cent. We were at the same time borrowing money on which we were paying £3 4s. 4d. per cent. He suggested to the Treasury that that was not a particularly good transaction. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said in defence of the fixed debt-charge that he was making a larger provision for the Debt than had ever been made before. That was true. Owing to the reduction of the interest to 2½ per cent., the £28,000,000 of fixed debt-charge did give the right hon. Gentleman a larger sum for the dead-weight debt than ever they had had before; but what provision had the right hon. Gentleman made for the £160,000,000 of the war debt? Before the war the fixed debt-charge stood at £23,000,000. The actual interest on the war debt was £4,500,000, while the total interest was £27,500,000, so that the whole provision which the right hon. Gentleman was making for the war debt was only one-third of 1 per cent. of the amount of the war debt. He submitted that that was not a sufficient buttress of our credit. As his hon. friend the Member for Islington had said, our ability to borrow at a low rate of interest was one of our best national defences, and he submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it was unwise parsimony on the part of any Government which did not put the fixed debt-charge at a sufficiently high rate to restore our credit.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he always liked on these occasions to say a word in favour of greater economy in the public expenditure. He thought that we were in greater danger from extravagant expenditure at the present time than from invasion. The debates which so often took place on this subject of greater economy did not seem to have the practical effect which all desired, and there seemed to be no real check on the expenditure of the country. He regarded the House of Commons as practically no check at all. Everyone seemed to desire some great work to be done to improve the condition of the people, but all these matters led to a very great expenditure. Only last week, when discussing the expenditure on their own comfort and luxuries, he had shown that that had increased in twenty years something like 30 per cent. Some drastic power was required at the head of the Government—whether by a Committee of the Cabinet he would not say—to see that each Department kept down expenditure. When he was in the public service Mr.

Gladstone laid down a law that a certain sum could only be set aside for each Department. He knew that that was an exceedingly difficult thing to do, but on the other hand the growth of expenditure, both Imperial and local, each acting and reacting on the other, was becoming a very alarming and serious matter.

He had read the other day with great concern the last statement of the National Debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech did not state, although he wished that the right hon. Gentleman had done so, that the Debt last year had really increased. That was a very serious question. It was all very well to say that the Debt was being repaid by £10,000,000 a year, but it was not enough if they paid off £10,000,000 in one way and increased the debt in another way by more than £10,000,000. Last year the absolute debt of the country was increased although we were at peace. That was a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. There was a spirit abroad of great extravagance, and one of the most efficient ways of meeting that would be largely to increase the repayment of their debt. He had always advocated that all debt, municipal and Imperial, should be made for shorter periods. He knew that it was always more popular to advocate expenditure, rather than the payment of debt. A short time ago it was urged that the cost of lighthouses amounting to £500,000 should be made a public charge, and there was a large vote in favour of it. It was astonishing that on a Friday afternoon a Bill should be passed throwing an additional £500,000 on the public expenditure. Then there was something like £500,000 for public buildings, and now they were proposing to feed the children at public schools. Those who advocated that measure were afraid to put the cost of it on local taxation and wanted to make it an Imperial charge. If this charge were to be put on the Imperial Exchequer, before many years had passed it would amount to many millions. Then the Government had brought in a Bill to provide employment for the people at the cost of the State or of municipalities. When once this principle was introduced they could readily understand that the cost would ultimately be thrown upon the Imperial Exchequer, and that would be a large addition to the expenditure of the country.

The hon. Member for Cambridge University had referred to the statement made by the Prime Minister on the subject of Imperial defence, and he must say that upon him that speech had had a somewhat sobering effect, because the only possible logic of it seemed to him to be extremely useful. Surely if it had any meaning at all it meant that they should insist upon the reduction of the Army and the Navy. Indeed, he was so led away by the speech that he thought it meant that we wanted very little Army at all. He thought, however, that it was unreasonable to complain that it had not had any effect upon the present Estimates, but it must have a result upon the finances of the next year or two in a decrease in the expenditure upon the Army and Navy. No doubt good came out of ill, and surely the result of this great war which was going on would be to tend to decrease the enormous armaments which were being created throughout the world. The two nations engaged, and certainly Russia, would not for many years be in a position to be a source of danger, and he hoped that this meant a considerable reduction on our war expenditure.

He was glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had devoted £1,000,000 to the reduction of the National Debt. He regretted that it was not more, and if the right hon. Gentleman had put his whole surplus to the reduction of debt it would have been wiser. He regarded the increase of this habit of spending and the gigantic growth of our expenditure with great alarm. It was an extraordinary thing that when the matter was looked at over a period of years, and when by some unforeseen circumstance or by war the Estimates became swollen, it was extremely difficult to get them down again. He said, however, that they should put their shoulders to the wheel in order to reduce this great expenditure. It was no use to attempt to do it by theory or abstract principles, they must put their finger upon every point and every detail. Above all things they must pay their debts.

Thirty or forty years ago, when the nation was far less wealthy, larger sums were applied to the reduction of the National Debt. It was really, however, illusory to say that they were paying off their debt when, while on the one hand they were paying it off, on the other they were increasing it. The last Return showed that they had not reduced the amount of the Debt, and this was a very serious consideration. He hoped the House would give up these panics in regard to war, and that they should learn to defend themselves in the best possible way by reducing their expenditure, paying off their debts, and by being in a position to meet their enemies by the best possible weapon, viz., a large and substantial balance at the bank.

Mr. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said it was with a feeling of intense interest, tempered with some feeling of despair, that he had listened to the arguments which had been addressed from various quarters of the House in favour of a serious and radical change in the direction of economy. It had been said that the primary function of the House of Commons was to be the protector of the revenue, and to prevent improper expenditure, but the very principle of constitutional rule which laid down the method by which expenditure could be effectively brought before the House of Commons showed the danger of leaving the question to that Assembly. No Vote could be propounded except upon the recommendation of the responsible Ministers of the Crown, and the very reason that it could not be brought forward, except in that way, showed the danger of trusting the initiative in such cases to a large body of men. It might, of course, lead to log-rolling, and one set of Members might support another set of Members in regard to increased expenditure in exchange for support for another item of increased charge. The primary check was, of course, with the Cabinet, which was responsible for all the expenditure. He did not say but that the influence of an extravagant House of Commons, or of an extravagant Party behind the Ministry, were not evil factors in producing increased expenditure, and that the House of Commons did not share the responsibility of producing increased expenditure, but undoubtedly the first responsibility was with the Cabinet of the day.

Another consideration they had to take into view was that as expenditure increased the Estimates increased. They became accustomed to deal with tens and twenties of millions, and they did not regard hundreds of thousands of pounds as they did before. When there was a large and extravagant expenditure occasioned by war there was always a general swelling of Estimates, and it had always been impossible to reduce them. He said that as guardians of the public weal they ought to recognise these difficulties in order to overcome them, and although there had been, owing to this vicious principle, a general rise of expenditure in all Departments it was their duty to check it. There was no use in saving by the spigot if they wasted by the bunghole. They knew where the big elements were. They were in the expenditure, unproductive in one sense, on defence, expenditure on the Army and Navy. Another mischievous element in English finance was the short loans for purposes which ought to be met year after year out of the revenue of the year. They saw the folly of the system. They saw small amounts first proposed and how they had grown. It was so much easier to create a little debt than to raise by taxation what ought to be met each year out of the expenditure of the year. They knew what the result of such a policy was in private life, and although he did not say that ruin would ensue in these islands, he did say that the system of raising loans for unproductive expenditure during the past few years was a pernicious system, and that when the House saw this system going on they ought to set their faces against a continuance of it.

He sympathised with the views which had been expressed in this debate as to the effect which ought to be produced in this class of expenditure if defence were the policy which was propounded by the First Minister the other day. The right hon. Gentleman divided his subject into three heads. He spoke of the defence of these islands, and of India, and as a middle head he alluded to colonial defence. As to the first he put the very worst case that could be put and proved to his own satisfaction that under the worst conditions possible to conceive, these islands were impregnable from the assault of a foreign foe, and upon that the right hon. Gentleman laid down views which tended very largely to the reduction of the Army expenditure of the country, in so far as it might be supposed to be justified by the necessity of not having a large force at hand to repel an invasion which he said it was proposterous to suppose would ever be attempted, or if attempted would never result in an effective landing. With regard to the Indian problem the right hon. Gentleman set up a *casus belli* in the case of a strategic railway being built into Afghanistan. The Indian problem was different to the French problem, because in the Indian problem the great country which was to be the aggressor and build the strategic railways was now engaged in deadly conflict with an Eastern nation, and whether she won or lost she would be left the severe task of restoring her finances to a sound basis and the severer task of restoring her domestic relations to their normal condition before she could set out on the grave task referred to by the Prime Minister. For the Prime Minister, therefore, to say that that necessitated the keeping up of a great Army outside the Indian Army in order to meet Russian aggression was as far-fetched a suggestion as it was possible to conceive.

The middle head of the problem, that of colonial defence, divided itself into two parts: the defence of the numerous naval bases or possessions, like Malta, Gibraltar, Hong-Kong, and others of that character, the consideration of which was a naval matter; and the defence of the North American, the South African, and the Australian self-governing Colonies of this country. He did not propose to touch on the question of the Australian or the South African Colonies, but he would just say a word as to the North American possessions of this country and ask the House to consider the problem as it really existed with regard to those possessions. Two entirely different sets of considerations arose with reference to the quarter from which any possible attack might be made. He himself believed that the danger in regard to the North American possessions of the Crown, in so far as an attack with a view of obtaining and retaining them as a prize of war by any enemy of the United Kingdom outside of America, was very trifling indeed. The difficulty to which any other nation—take France, Germany, or any other country, for example—would be exposed in fighting the North American possessions of the Crown would be extremely serious, owing to the distance of its base from the scene of operations, the difficulty of guarding a fleet of transports to the scene of action, and the difficulty of dealing with a country of that vast extent. Those difficulties would be aggravated by the circumstances of the doctrine which the United States of America had adopted, called the Monroe Doctrine, and that itself would be an indication to the other nations of the world that they could not expect to retain it as a prize of war even if they obtained military possession of that country. From all points of view there was but a slight danger of a successful attack upon those possessions, except from the United States of America. He did not see that that was a reason, considering the impregnable condition of this country, for making the suggestion that the commerce and the outlying possessions of the Crown did not demand some Fleet, but the danger of a successful attack from such quarters as he had referred to should not be regarded as very great. There might be some attempt to harass us, but the danger of that country being conquered did not exist.

Dealing with the attack from the land side, he had heard a good deal of the military forces now being maintained for the defence of the Colonies. Arrangements had been made by which the Dominion of Canada had undertaken to supply the troops necessary on the sea-board of the Atlantic at Halifax and Victoria, which up to the present time had been supplied by this country. Arrangements were also being made for fortifying the city of Quebec. He could imagine an attack by the United States upon Canada, but the conditions of such an attack, if regarded as possible, were such that no lover of this country would for an instant suggest that the defence of the colony, so far as it was conducted from this side of the Empire, should be otherwise than defence on the ocean. No one would suggest that this nation, with its vast obligations and population of 40,000,000, should seriously propose to engage in a land war with the United States, with its 80,000,000 of population, when they reflected upon the conditions of former conflicts between these two countries under entirely different conditions, and when they reflected upon the enormous difference in favour of defence which had been produced by the altered conditions of modern warfare. The course which would be taken in such a calamitous juncture as that which he had contemplated would no doubt be a war upon the sea. If any troops of this country were to be used in such a contest, they would have to be troops accompanied by the Fleet, using the Fleet for their base for those operations on the seaboard. Therefore the people of these islands did not need to consider seriously the question of the military forces of this country being required in reference to any conflict in connection with the North American possessions of the Crown. Canada had 4,000 miles of land frontier, and it was in a large part level and fertile and gridironed with railways. It contained many fertile fields and thriving towns, and was admirably adapted for marching into. No doubt it would be defended with all the gallantry which his countrymen could exercise, and they would be prepared to die in the last ditch, but 5,000,000 of people under these conditions could not successfully resist the persistent attack of 80,000,000 of their enemies, and the military position of Canada would in the end be taken by the United States; but the question of who should hold Canada afterwards would be decided upon the sea and not upon the land. That was the state of the case.

The Canadians believed that they had the best Constitution in the world, and they believed that there ought to be a unification of the continent. This country did not think so. But he thought it would be a shortsighted policy and a public calamity, calculated to dash the realisation of their hopes, to attempt to keep these 5,000,000 people in apprehension of such a war. He was only pointing out the limitations which should exist in case there was this calamity—whether from beyond the seas or from the North American Continent—of a war which involved the fate and fortunes of the North American possessions of the Crown. These conditions ought to be considered with reference to the naval and military expenditure of this country. They did not involve the suggestion that there was no regard to be paid to the possibility of an attack from the shores of North America, but they should be attended to when the suggestion was made that these outlying possessions ought to contribute very large sums in the same proportion as Ireland, which had a population not so large as them, towards military and naval expenditure. Their conditions and relations were such that they had no effective control over the policy of this country upon which depended the issues of peace or war, and willing as they were to run the risk, and anxious as they were to obtain the advantages of their present connection with the Crown, it was absurd to suggest that they should be called upon to pay for a policy which the people of this country controlled. What effective control did Ireland exercise over the policy of the present Government? What were the feelings of Irish representatives in regard to the last great and calamitous war? How much did their protests affect the circumstances which led to that war? With that lesson before them how could it be suggested that our colonial possessions would have any effective voice in the circumstances which decided the issue between peace and war. He believed they were perfectly prepared to do what they ought to do in a liberal and just spirit, to bear that portion of their responsibility in the anomalous condition in which the Empire stood. If they could co-ordinate the Empire in some such way as would give a common interest to all concerned it was one thing, but until they succeeded in that task they would find it necessary and just to face the great bulk of their naval and military expenditure from the resources of the islands which initiated and controlled the policy upon which depended the chances of the issue of peace and war.

He and his friends were prepared to give the utmost support to all those who objected to the bloated military and naval expenditure which was the great and prime cause of the change in the financial condition of this country in the last few years. They objected to the continuance of the system of borrowing for what ought to be paid for out of the yearly revenue in respect of these matters. They objected to it being put forward that these were assets when the only sense in which they were assets was that they were a double liability upon which they not only paid interest on the debt incurred, but had also to provide more money, more guns for the forts, and more men to occupy the forts and work the guns. So far from this expenditure being merely unproductive, it consisted actually of assets which caused expenditure. They were liabilities and not assets. They would assist in every way possible the adoption of a saner system in reference to the naval and military expenditure of this country, in the full belief that that saner system would enable them to reduce taxation, relieve the springs of industry, and enable the process of accumulation of wealth not merely amongst the millionaires, but also amongst the daily toilers in the land. Such a policy would produce contentment and prosperity all through the country, and so render it strong with a real and greater strength than any free nation could obtain in the issue of war.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said this debate had turned upon issues of profound importance ever since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University and the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries raised it to the higher level of the general policy of the State which must determine the course of expenditure. In what he wished to say he rather desired to protest against the whole policy underlying this Budget. He thought they had a right to protest against the present unsatisfactory financial position of the country as an intolerable wrong. In face of the speech made by the Prime Minister the other day, and when many suggestions had been made which pointed in the direction of economy in regard to expenditure upon armaments, and when measures had already been taken with regard to the Navy, it seemed to him a very monstrous thing that they should have this great increase in the debt of the United Kingdom. Setting aside the repayment by the Transvaal of the sums advanced for resettlement there had been a distinct increase in the total indebtedness of the United Kingdom. Further, this total indebtedness had been allowed to go on accumulating with perfect knowledge of the tremendous problems of local taxation and local indebtedness with which the country had been almost overwhelmed in the last few years. Most earnest appeals had been made by the local taxpayer in every possible form for relief, while at the same time this policy of accumulating, rather than decreasing, debt had been continued. He had had the curiosity during the past few days to look up the facts with regard to the debt of the country, and he found that not only was it true that the debt of the country was going on increasing year by year, but that if they looked back twenty-two or twenty-three years ago, Mr. Childers initiated then his wise policy for a sweeping and general reduction of the National Debt by the introduction of a new form of annuities, and a new scheme for superseding the annuities falling due in 1885, the new scheme to effect in the course of twenty years a reduction in the Debt of £176,000,000. That was the situation, the heyday of Liberal finance—a time not only of great social happiness and freedom from oppressive taxes, but also a time when this country had great strength in the councils of Europe and was in a position of far less peril than it was at the present time. In a speech made twenty-two years ago Lord James, then Sir Henry James, dealing with the financial scheme of Mr. Childers, stated that—

> "They (the Liberal Government) have anticipated the filling in of the terminable annuities in 1885, and in advance have created others. The result is, that in twenty years

£176,000,000 of debt will be paid off, and if at the end of that time a Finance Minister shall be found courageous enough to maintain the same amount of payment on account of debt, and if we are wise enough to avoid war, and not to add to the debt, not only some who are now living, but even men old enough now to be enjoying the franchise, may live to see the day when the country shall be entirely free of its National Debt."

Under this scheme the Debt had been gradually reduced till in 1900 it stood at £628,000,000. Now we saw staring in our faces, in the appalling Return issued a few days ago, this tremendous debt of £800,000,000, in addition to the vast indebtedness of the local authorities, amounting to nearly £500,000,000, which formed an equal, if not a severer burden on the taxpayers of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer always laid his case before the House with a lucidity and a consideration for his opponents which was deserving of all praise, but it seemed to him to be an absolute duty in the interest of the classes whose special taxable capacity had been so conspicuously neglected in the finance of the last ten years to enter an emphatic protest against the financial position in which we found ourselves to-day. The raising of such a sum as over £140,000,000 in time of peace was, to his mind, a wrong which the House should not hesitate to denounce and condemn whether as regards just incidence on the several classes who had to bear the pressure of the taxes or as a burden on industry, or as draining national resources which should be husbanded for great emergencies. This taxation had been a dead weight on our industries, and though there had been in the last two years a tremendous expansion in our foreign trade, home trade had been suffering. The Secretary of the Treasury had said to-day that the country was rich enough and willing enough to bear the burden of taxation. He himself completely traversed that proposition. The right hon. Member for West Bristol in his Budget speech in 1896, proved that while the produce of taxes had increased 15 to 16 per cent. in twenty years to that time, expenditure had grown 68 per cent. or four times faster. He had himself calculated the figures for the past ten years to 1904, and found that in ten years the present Government expenditure had grown 65 per cent. and had gone up from six to eight times as fast as the increase in the produce of taxes.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

THAMES CONSERVANCY BILL (By Order).

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. GRENFELL (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe) said he rose to support the Second Reading of the Bill which had been deposited upon behalf of the Thames Conservancy. He did not know that the fate that had been dealt out to other Bills on the same subject, such as the Port of London Bill, encouraged anyone very much in promoting a Bill of a somewhat similar character; but this Bill was rather different from the other Bills which had been introduced by the Government, or the one introduced by the London County Council, in so far as it appertained to the Thames Conservancy, and affected the river as a whole. He had found in regard to the Thames Conservancy that there was a good deal of doubt as to how its business was transacted and as to how its funds were provided. The Thames Conservancy had jurisdiction over the whole of the River Thames, from its source practically down to within a short distance of the Nore. The funds were entirely distinct. They were divided into two parts, the Upper Thames Navigation and the Lower Thames Navigation funds; and those who contributed the sums of money for the lower navigation might rest assured that they were absolutely devoted to that purpose. As regards the upper portion of the river there were two principal committees, the River Purification Committee and the Upper River Committee, and this Bill proposed to effect certain changes with regard to river purification. Under the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy there were altogether some 5,200 square miles;

under the jurisdiction of the Purification Committee there were 3,800 square miles, and those were above the intakes of the London water companies, and, therefore, it was of the most supreme importance that those clauses of the earlier Bill should be carried out in the spirit as well as in the letter.

He believed that the Thames at the present time was the cleanest river in Europe. At all events it was the river in Europe which had the least drainage flowing into it, and it was the river which was more analysed than any other in the world. It was analysed by the London County Council, it was analysed by the London water companies, and it was analysed by the Thames Conservancy. This Bill proposed to make some slight alterations in regard to the function of the Thames Conservancy of seeing that the river was kept absolutely pure. It was proposed under this Bill that the power of the inspectors should be extended throughout the whole of the tributaries of the Thames, above the intakes of the London water companies, and should not be restricted, as they were now, to within three miles of the main river, and also that the power of inspection should be distributed as regards trade refuse over the whole of that area and the tributaries. They also proposed under this Bill that the powers of the inspectors should not be confined to between the hours of ten in the morning and four o'clock in the afternoon, but that they should be empowered to inspect at any time. There was also another small matter in regard to the purification of the river. The mill-owners when they cleaned out the mud of their mill beds should be compelled to take it and spread it on the land, and should not be allowed to stir it up and pass it down the river.

The Thames Conservancy had jurisdiction over the whole of the River Thames, including the whole of the fresh - water portion of the Thames. That was 136 complete water miles and comprised forty-seven locks. In carrying out their duties they in many respects met with a certain amount of difficulty which they sought under this Bill to remedy. Clause 7 dealt with land. They had had great difficulty in securing land for building locks, lands for making the necessary locks, and so forth. It would have been absolutely impossible for the Thames Conservancy to have built certain of their locks if they had not been able to employ the Lands Clauses Act. Under this Bill they sought to have the same power of securing land as would be given them under the Lands Clauses Act. There were one or two other matters of minor importance, but he did not wish to detain the House by going into them.

With regard to the lower river, of which they had heard very much of late, this Bill, the Bill of the Thames Conservancy, as deposited, sought practically to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. It sought to carry out certain works of great magnitude for which it asked power to borrow the sum of £3,000,000. The Port of London was practically forty-one miles in length. It was still, and had been for the past 200 years, the largest port in the world, and even of late years it had been increasing, though of course there were indications that with the great works being carried out at foreign ports that supremacy would in a short time be contested. London, unfortunately, had ceased to be the great transhipment port of the world, which it used to be for many years in the past. Large ships were able now to go to foreign ports instead of coming to London, whence in the old days the merchandise used to be transported to foreign ports in smaller vessels. They had heard that the Port of Antwerp intended to make large improvements, and it had been the intention to have an access to that port thirty-nine feet in depth, with numerous quays and docks all down its length, and it certainly was borne upon the attention of anyone who had the welfare of London, he might almost say the welfare of this country, at heart, that they at all events should make some slight attempt to keep the trade which they already possessed, and prevent it being attracted in this way to other ports.

The Bill which had been deposited attempted to make some move in this direction. The main provisions were that a sum of £3,000,000 should be borrowed in order to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The Thames Conservancy was at present the body in charge of this great waterway. Its duties were manifold, but its income, unfortunately, very small. He believed that London, as far as the large portion of the merchandise in the Port of London was concerned, and as far as the river dues were concerned, was certainly the cheapest port in Europe. As far as the money which went to keep up the waterway was concerned, the port authority received lower dues in London than it did in any port in Europe. The charges of the Thames Conservancy were ½d. per ton for coastwise trade, and ¾d. per ton for the trade in and out, and in return for this miserable pittance they had certainly very important duties to perform. In the first place, dredging was committed to the charge of the Thames Conservancy. They were the only body authorised to carry it out, and it was perfectly obvious that with the small sum of money which the Thames Conservancy received it was absolutely impossible for them to carry out any of these large schemes of dredging which were carried out in the ports abroad. They all knew that in foreign ports these ports were assisted by the public or municipal funds. That had not been, as regards public funds, the practice in this country; and if they took the other ports of this country, they found that the ports were maintained by charges which were levied both on the tonnage of ships and by dues on goods. There were no dues in the Port of London on goods, and they only received a very small return from the tonnage dues on the ships. The duties of the Thames Conservancy were first of all the dredging. They had expended a larger proportion of their funds in dredging than any other port. During last year they spent something like £27,000 in that way. Besides that the duty fell on the Thames Conservancy of carrying out the whole of the survey of the port. A survey had just been completed. Something like £20,000 was involved in the survey of the river from the Nore up to Gravesend, and something like £40,000 in a survey of the river from Gravesend up to London Bridge. They provided moorage and anchorage free; they provided causeways and landing stairs, and so on. Besides all this they had to regulate the traffic, and were the guardians of the shipping against the dangers of explosives. That was a great deal of service for very small dues, and it could not, therefore, be surprising that in a large scheme of dredging such as must be carried out in the Port of London, the Thames Conservancy should come to the House and ask for more money to enable them to carry out those duties.

The scheme as defined in the Bill was founded on the Report of the Royal Commission. A large sum of money, £3,000,000, was to be borrowed, and the dredging was to be carried out from the Nore right up to the Royal Albert Docks. Under the Bill the Thames Conservancy would finance itself in carrying out these large improvements. It was proposed in the first place to levy dues on goods, as was done at other ports, to increase the dues upon shipping, and to levy dues on barges. The Thames Conservancy provided seventy-two moorings for barges free, and there were something like 12,000 barges in the Port of London, which went in and out of the docks and used the river. It was also proposed in the Bill to give increased representation to shipowners and traders in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

There was one matter which he would venture to draw the attention of the Government to for a very short space of time, and that was the danger under which the Port of London lay with regard to dangerous oils. The Thames Conservancy had already approached the Board of Trade, and he believed the Board of Trade had been in communication with the Home Office on the subject, but he would like to call the attention of the House for one moment to one fact. Though the very greatest care was taken with regard to the carriage of these dangerous and inflammable oils up the river—they were only allowed to carry them in certain ships which had been inspected, and to deposit them in certain places—when these dangerous and inflammable oils went down the river there was absolutely no care taken to see that they did not endanger, by accident or criminal neglect, the enormous amount of shipping—33,000,000 tons in the Port with 12,000 barges—and all the quays and docks with which the river was so closely studded. Therefore he wished respectfully and publicly to call the attention of the Home Office, and also the attention of the Board of Trade, to this lamentable state of affairs. Some of the members of the Thames Conservancy made a few experiments, on a small scale only, with regard to some of these inflammable oils. They put some on the water, and lit it with a match, and convinced themselves that there was a very terrible danger indeed.

It was the scheme of the Thames Conservancy under this Bill to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. But anyone who had made himself at all conversant with the intricate nature of the interests on the Thames, the interest of the docks, the interests of the wharfingers, the interests of the barge-owners, and the interests of the traders, could not but feel that this scheme was certainly not of a character to be a settlement of the question of the Port of London. The Thames Conservancy were fully alive to the absolute necessity of some real attempt being made to try to bring together all those divergent interests, and to bring a Bill to the House of Commons which would have the consent and the concurrence at all events of a very large proportion of all those bodies. It was a very difficult task, and it might be an impossible task; but still if the attempt was made, and then representations were made to the Government of the day on that basis, he felt confident something would be done for the Port of London on a big scale, which might bring it up to date. This scheme was practically a dredging scheme. He differed to some extent with the very important Report, the admirable Report, of the Royal Commission, with regard to the dredging scheme. Being more or less conversant with the river, he felt rather doubtful himself as to the propriety and necessity of a deep narrow channel right up into the heart of London. He felt that there were many difficulties in regard to that scheme besides its expense. There was a danger to the river bank. There was also the danger of starting running water, and there was a still greater danger of starting running sand, which he believed would be a very difficult matter to deal with. In regard to a narrow channel on the river, he had had conversations with the dockowners, and they told him that at low water with a channel only 600 feet wide, with ships 600 feet long, very few pilots would have the courage, or rather the audacity, to bring ships up. These and many other considerations with which he would not weary the House had led him to try to see himself, in a humble way, if he could not suggest to the House a somewhat humbler scheme, at all events, a scheme which had had in the past a very great deal of support, the unanimous support, of two important inquiries held into this subject.

Giving up this scheme of dredging out the river fifteen feet right up to London, they found if they went lower down they came across a portion of the river as to which it had been unanimously stated that it was absolutely necessary that there should be deep water, at least thirty feet. That portion of the river, twenty-one and a-half miles, extended from the Nore to Gravesend. In 1896 a Commission was appointed, the Lower Thames Navigation Commission, whose special duty it was to inquire into this portion of the river and to make recommendations. This Lower Thames Navigation Commission unanimously reported that one of the first essentials to be provided in the river was a channel thirty feet deep and 1,000 feet wide from the Nore to Gravesend. The reasons they gave for this were, that it would be greatly to the interests of the Port of London if any ship leaving the river outward bound could be absolutely certain that when it got to Gravesend, whatever the state of the tide, it could continue its journey, and if homeward bound that at the lowest state of the tide it could be absolutely certain of getting up to Gravesend, in which case they would very often save a tide later on. This view was supported by all the shipowners who were examined before that body. They all expressed themselves strongly in favour of the thirty-feet channel from the Nore to Gravesend. In addition to that the evidence subsequently taken by the Royal Commission unanimously endorsed their view that there should be a deep-water channel up to Gravesend. The short-sea trader might naturally think that as his vessel did not draw much water a deep channel from Gravesend outward would not be a matter of very great importance to him, but some of these short-sea traders took rather a wider view of the matter as to what might happen. They testified that their prosperity depended upon the prosperity of the port, that the interests of the smaller vessels were bound up to a large extent in the interests of the larger ships, and that if larger ships came to the port there would be more work for the smaller ships to do. They were also face to face with this fear, that if real attempts were not made to improve the Port of London, as the trade now was to the big vessel, the Port of London might lose all those big ships, and a great deal of the work now done by the small vessels would be driven away with them. What he wanted to try to impress on the House was that it was perhaps, even for shipowners, not a wise thing to take a narrow view as regards this matter, even if they did not themselves see how they were going to benefit by the deepening of the river. If the river was deep enough at Gravesend it fell in with any scheme of developing the port that had been brought to the public notice. The deepening of the river up to Gravesend must be done. Therefore, any money which was spent on the river below Gravesend, from Gravesend to the sea, was money that certainly would not be thrown away, but which would fall in with any scheme, and not only with any scheme but with any body which had in time to come to regulate the affairs of this port.

That being the case, he ventured to make the following proposition to the House. Knowing that the scheme was a large scheme, and in some of its aspects not an entirely satisfactory scheme of settling this great matter, he ventured to suggest that he might be allowed to withdraw all those clauses from the Bill which suggested interference with the upper river, or with the Port of London with regard to dues, and merely to retain those clauses which would enable the Thames Conservancy to carry out this scheme of deepening the river from the Nore to Gravesend, and also give them the means of obtaining a certain amount of the expense of that deepening. He observed that though when he read the evidence given before these various Commissions the millowners were unanimous in desiring a deep channel, when he talked on the subject of payment they were not as entirely enthusiastic as they were before. An outline of the scheme which he should lay before the House was that the Thames Conservancy should be empowered to borrow £400,000. Their contribution to this great work would be that they would borrow this great amount of money, and would be liable for the repayment of interest and capital. He believed the money they borrowed before they borrowed at 3 per cent. with 1 per cent. for sinking fund, which made it 4 per cent., it amounted to £16,000 a year contribution from the Thames Conservancy for fifty years. Then he would ask the shipowners to contribute something, not for fifty years but for three years, and he believed that during the three years they should be able to complete the whole of this scheme, so that there would be from Gravesend to the Nore a channel thirty feet deep at ordinary low water spring tide, and 1,000 feet in width. As he had already said, the only dues which the Thames Conservancy levied were dues on ships, and they were at present ½d. coastwise and ¾d. in and out. He would propose at this period to double those dues, and make them 1d. and 1½d. He need not go through the various comparisons of the ports, but he found that in those ports which charged dues on goods the charge would be a great deal more than those increased charges, even with the tonnage charge on ships. He thought that would be a scheme that at all events would be worth while the consideration of this House and of a Committee upstairs.

The position was this: Was nothing to be done to the Port of London for the next five years? He had proposed a scheme which anyhow would fit in with any scheme, whatever scheme was carried out in time to come. He ventured to think that the charges were not great.

The charge for three years even on the shipowners was not a large charge. The first time dues on tonnage were ever charged in the Thames was in 1799, and that was a temporary charge. They were lowered in 1834, and had remained at that low figure ever since, although the demands on the Thames Conservancy had been infinitely greater. Nothing could be done to improve the Port of London for years unless this Bill was considered by the Committee upstairs. He ventured to think that the House would take a favourable view of this business proposal he had put before them, and which the House would have the power of reconsidering when it came back from Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street.) said he had listened to the very interesting speech of the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Second Reading of this Bill. He was bound to say that he had been surprised at the changes the hon. Member proposed to make in the Bill, and if these were carried out his strong opposition to the Bill as it now stood would disappear. The policy which the hon. Gentleman was pursuing was a very wise one, because if those changes had not been made the most strenuous opposition to it would have been offered by those whose interests would have been affected. He understood that the hon. Gentleman was going to abandon altogether all the clauses except those which dealt with dredging the river from the Nore to Gravesend. No one was more anxious than he was to see the ports of the United Kingdom made thoroughly good. He represented a part of the north-east coast of England which had spent very large sums indeed to improve the rivers. He recognised that it was necessary to have good access to the River Thames, and to the various docks, and no one, he was sure, would grudge a reasonable charge, provided they were likely to get a good share of the benefit which would arise from that expenditure. In his part of the country they had a large number of coasters trading from the Tyne and from Scotland to London, the present depth of the river was as much as they required, and they felt that it would be rather hard that they should be called upon to pay a large proportion of expenditure for the deepening of the river mainly because a few large liners might have a better access to the docks. The people who used the docks ought to pay for that. As the liners only used the river perhaps once in two months, and as the coasters from the Tyne and Scotland practically came into the Thames every week, the charge put upon them, as compared with the large ships, would be a very heavy one indeed. He would not tie himself as to what would happen in Committee upstairs; but after the hon. Gentleman's statement he would be disposed to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. He observed, however, that a large proportion of the gentlemen on the Thames Conservancy were not dues payers. He had had experience of that kind of thing. There was a time when the whole control of the Tyne was in the hands of the Newcastle Corporation. The people who spent the money which they had not to find always spent it in their own interests, and almost every penny that was got from shipping dues was spent in improving the town and not the river. An Act was afterwards passed appointing a Commission for the Tyne, on which half the representation was given to the municipalities on the river, and half to the dues payers, while three were appointed by the Board of Trade to hold the balance. He thought that the dues payers were entitled to half the representation on the Thames Conservancy.

*Sir W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) congratulated his hon. friend not merely for the deep interest which he took in the Thames, but also for the very lucid explanation he had given of the objects he had in view. It seemed to him, however, that his hon. friend was in considerable difficulty, because the changes he proposed would make this practically a new Bill, and unless the sailing-barge interests, which he represented, were satisfied on some points they would object to sending the Bill upstairs. The cement and other trade from the Medway, which was the largest in the county of Kent, represented almost exclusively the sailing and other barges plying to and from the Thames, and it would be a serious thing if the dues on these barges were doubled. Many of these barges also were engaged in carrying raw material up to the docks to be converted into manufactured goods. A Return was obtained by the Thames Conservancy of the number of these barges, and in one week in October last no less than 2,005 passed and repassed Gravesend. The barges were mainly engaged in the cement industry, which gave employment to something like 10,000 men, and it was estimated that the proposed charges upon them would mean an extra burden of from £1,800 to £2,000 a year. That was a serious burden on an industry already in great difficulties as regarded foreign competition, and in which those engaged could now scarcely keep their heads above water.

*MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said he thought the hon. Gentleman was to be congratulated on having dropped three-fourths of his Bill. The only serious objection taken so far to the proposal as it now stood was from the right hon. Member for Dartford. He quite understood the class of traffic to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, and he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that all barges under forty-five tons register could enter the Thames without paying mooring dues or dock dues; so that it was only vessels over forty-five tons which were likely to be touched by the proposal of the Thames Conservancy as it now stood. He was sure that the great improvements made in the rivers of Scotland or England could not have been carried out successfully if all the vessels frequenting these rivers had not contributed to their upkeep. The Clyde had been dredged to a great depth up to Glasgow at enormous expense. Only seventy years ago the Clyde was a muddy stream which at Glasgow it was possible to wade across. Now, vessels drawing thirty feet could go up to Glasgow, but all the vessels using the Clyde drawing nine or ten feet of water and upwards had contributed their quota to the work of deepening the river. The same held good of the Tyne. It was, moreover, obvious that any general extension of the trade of the Port of London would benefit the smaller vessels also. He was glad to hear that the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill was going to drop the scheme for tinkering with the Thames Conservancy. That body could not be maintained as at present. There should be a new port authority representing all the users of the river. In regard to the financial proposals, he trusted that the principle laid down in the Bill of throwing all the new dues received on shipping exclusively would not be regarded as a permanent precedent for the future. The period of fifty years for the repayment of loans for dredging was absurd. No one could maintain that the work from Gravesend to the Nore would not have to be redredged at least every ten not every fifty years. He thought these financial proposals were unsound, and would not be tolerated in the case of any municipal scheme.

MR. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow) said he understood that the Bill which they were asked to give a Second Reading to was to consist of only Clauses 3, 4, 9, and 10. As chairman of a dock company which had just spend £1,000,000 on new entrances they naturally wanted more water. They looked upon this movement as the beginning of the work, and they hoped to see not only a deep-water channel from the Nore to Gravesend, but in the higher reaches of the river also. He thought the hon. Gentleman was very well advised in altering the Bill, because as originally introduced it would have been most strenuously opposed by most of the users of the Port of London. There was an important question regarding the safety of the banks when dredging took place. In the county of Essex there was a large stretch of land which was below the level of the river and which would be flooded if due care was not taken to prevent the weakening of the banks of the river, and he hoped that the Committee upstairs would see that, in carrying out the work of dredging to an extra depth, the banks would be properly protected.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said that the Thames Conservancy was to be congratulated on its new official representative; and, personally, he congratulated that body on the change of its chairman, who had made a bad Bill a little better. So far so good; but they must not allow their congratulations to the new chairman to carry them into depths of unsound finance. He could not help being struck by the speech of the new chairman of the Thames Conservancy when he said despairingly, certainly feelingly, "Is nothing to be done for the Port of London?" Why did he not say that a year ago, when the Government introduced a Port of London Bill? Then the Thames Conservancy had an opportunity of getting what they were asking for now in the remnant of this Bill, the effect of which would have been not only to benefit large ships from the Nore to Gravesend, but which have benefited the small vessels which carried cargo from Gravesend to Teddington Lock. But many members of the Thames Conservancy had done their best to oppose the Government Bill, and it had been dropped. Another body brought in a Bill—he meant the London County Council—the object of which was to carry out what the Government proposed to do, but to do it under circumstances where London, as a whole, would contribute more from the common treasury towards the improvement of the river, and the result of which would have been a smaller charge on goods than was proposed in this attenuated Bill.

The Thames Conservancy had always pursued a dog-in-the-manger policy on this subject. He, himself, on the Rivers Committee of the London County Council, had moved a resolution to make a free gift of £2,500,000 for the improvement of the river, so important did he believe was it that the Port of London should be developed. But that proposal was not received as it might have been. Both the Government and the County Council's Bills had been cast aside, and now the Thames Conservancy came forward tardily with a Bill of their own, nine-tenths of which had to be jettisoned. What had happened was that nine-tenths of this bad Bill had been jettisoned, and the chairman had been thrown over with it. The only proposal was that the Thames Conservancy should be allowed to spend £400,000 on dredging the river from the Nore to Gravesend, and to get that money back they proposed to double their dues on shipping. That, of course, was a matter for the shipowners to fight out with the Thames Conservancy, but, in his opinion, the doubling of the dues would affect some interests far more prejudicially than the promoters of the Bill were inclined to admit. If they were going to improve the River Thames to the extent of the demands made upon it, £400,000 was a miserably inadequate sum for that purpose. Why should that part of the river from Gravesend to Teddington Lock be ignored? He conceded that this project would admit a large number of ships from the Nore to Gravesend, but there were a large number of ships of between 1,000 and 3,000 tonnage that did a great deal of trade who would not be benefitted. He alluded to the smaller class of crafts which traded between Gravesend and Battersea, which carried north country coal to the Beckton Gas Works and the South Metropolitan Gas Works, also to the colliers carrying 900 tons up to Nine Elms and Battersea. All these vessels would have to contribute to the double duty on shipping while they would get absolutely no advantage or benefit from this expenditure, which would be laid out for the benefit of the liner. "The liner was a lady," and as usual the lady was going to have the best of the bargain. But the bulk of the regular trade was done not by large vessels but by these small ships. He hoped if the Bill was allowed to go to a Committee that these points would be considered, as he was sure that the wharfingers, the gas works, and the electric lighting companies, who did not depend upon the big steamers for their coal, would between now and next year get up an agitation against the very large vessels having a monopoly of the result of all this expenditure while those vessels which used the river most and paid the most rates did not get an equitable share of the benefits conferred by the Act. This was only one of the many anomalies which he might point out. He had no prejudice against the dredging of the river, by whomsoever it was done, but he did not wish the members of the Thames Conservancy to humbug themselves into the idea that the outlay of £400,000 was going to put the Thames in proper order. London owed a great debt to the chairman of the Thames Conservancy for the great attention he had given to the River Thames, but he would put the point to him that even supposing they spent £400,000 in dredging it thirty feet deep what was to prevent silting down, which would cause them to spend three or four times the amount now contemplated.

All the difficulty arose because the authorities had not the courage to do what they ought to have done. The Government introduced a Bill which dealt with the River Thames from above bridge and below bridge as one whole, and asked not for £400,000 but for £2,000,000 or £3,000,000. If that had been done they would have got a good river and adequate dredging from the Nore up to Teddington Lock. London did not ask for anything extravagant—nothing like what Antwerp and Bristol were doing. These two ports were spending ten times as much as London on their rivers and ports, which had not the physical or natural advantage which Father Thames had. The Thames Conservancy, however, would not agree with the Government measure and they also would have nothing to do with the County Council, but they brought in a Bill intrinsically bad and they asked Members of the House to let some portion of it through, because they all knew that this neglect of the dredging of the river—that this dilly-dallying with the River Thames was a commercial menance to the Port of London, and that this little concession which was to be given to the Thames Conservancy or to its new chairman was one which would have to be renewed two years, or at all events five or six years, hence. Their action hitherto had been miserably inadequate to bring the river up to a reasonable standard of depth and efficiency but, being a county councillor, he was a reasonable man. Coming from Spring Gardens, one was necessarily charitable and tolerant, and he was disposed to vote for the proposal of the new chairman upon one condition, viz., that he did not alter the *personnel* or the constitution, that he abandoned everything in the Bill except the £400,000 for dredging, and that he would put in in Committee a provision by which the owners of the smaller vessels should be equally protected with the owners of the larger vessels which used the lower reaches. If he would do that, then he was not disposed to vote against him. He said this, however, to the Government, that whatever the hon. Member who introduced this Bill did, a tremendous responsibility rested upon the Board of Trade. With all its shortcomings and defects, we had the largest port in the world and 15,000,000 tons coming from all corners of the earth and from every sea and region entered it, and he believed that if we had a port worthy of its name and the river we had, that 15,000,000 ought to be 22,000,000 within the next five years. Yet the Government, filled with the craven fear of being great, because Sir F. Dixon-Hartland held a blunderbuss at their heads, ran away and neglected their Imperial duty and their commercial liabilities.

What were they going to do with this Bill? Were they going to regard this miserable proposal as the last word on the port and river of London? If so, they were evading their duty. Their duty was to take this little Bill as a last concession to a dying body—a body which he would, if he had his way, take out to the Nore to-morrow and drown without the least compunction. Were the Government going to regard this little Bill as entirely a temporary concession to tide over a temporary difficulty until the Board did what they were authorised to do, and that was, look at this question from the Imperial point of view? They had hitherto been looking at it from the point of view of pettifogging vestrymen, who had a ditch to look after instead of the finest river in the world. Were the Government going to treat this as the final word or as a mere temporary expedient? He could assure the Government that if they did not do something for dredging, deepening, and improving the river they would, three or four years hence, be confronted by the hon. Member for Walthamstow, the hon. Member for Tilbury, and others, who would unite to save London from a Government which had been too feeble in promoting the interests of the river, and had not had the moral courage to face its responsibilities. But he saw from the general attitude of the representative of the Board of Trade that they were going to adopt his view, and that they would place this Bill as a temporary expedient in the hands of the Thames Conservancy to get over a difficulty. If the Government took that view, and it was the only statesmanlike view, he would not oppose the Bill. He hoped, however, that the Government would see that the officers of the Thames Conservancy, more disingenuous than the chairman, did not use the measure to fasten the Thames Conservancy on the London river and the London port. If the Government would view the Bill as he did, as merely helping lame dogs over a stile, and enabling the Thames Conservancy to justify its existence for the next two years, he was willing to vote for the Second Reading.

*Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he had supported the Government Bill for this purpose, and also the Bill of the London County Council, and he was glad to say that he could support that the residue of this proposal should go to the Committee. This question was vital to the interests of London as a port. Unless London was made a deep and a cheap port they would soon be lamenting not only the languishing, but departing, trade, and the commercial pre-eminence which London had hitherto enjoyed. There was one advantage in regard to the discussion of the previous Bills. London and the House had at last realised that it was not a question whether the trade of London had been somewhat increasing, but it was a question of what might have been the increase of trade in London, as at other ports both at home and abroad, if proper facilities had been given. The trade of the port of London suffered a slight decrease last year, although previously there had been slight increases, and the shipping ha nearly doubled during the last thirty years. The trade of Antwerp, however, had doubled in the last ten years. He remembered the chairman of the Thames Conservancy advising his colleagues to go to Antwerp, and if they did he was sure they would be astonished at what had been accomplished. There was now a deepened and straightened river and excellent access to the port, and there was at this moment a proposal to spend £10,000,000 more money on diverting and straightening the river at the last awkward bend into Antwerp itself. That would make Antwerp the best port in the whole world, and they had to take care that London was similarly armed, and that our port was made accessible and convenient, with one port authority charged with its equipment and the management of its trade.

One recommendation of this Bill as it now stood was the withdrawal of the proposed dues on goods. The London Chamber of Commerce had fought this question of keeping London a free port in the Courts and in Parliament for many years, and this was the most important consideration. They not only, as he had said, wanted a deep port but a cheap port, such as Hull was compared with London even for delivery on to quay. The Bill now became nearly a pure Conservancy Bill, and though it only dealt with one section of the river the other sections would have to be dealt with, but the Bill was consistent with that. He understood from his hon. friend that the proposal to repeal the present exemption from taxation of small vessels below forty-five tons would not now be dealt with by this Bill. It was a well established-exemption, and he thought it was based upon a correct principle. The very small coasting and trading vessels which dealt with a very large amount of the cement and other of the Medway and coastwise trades of London should not contribute like the larger vessels. At any rate, they should not contribute in the same degree as the larger vessels, to which this dredging of the channel was absolutely essential, a differentiation for which there was a precedent at Liverpool. He understood that his hon. friend would not insist upon the repeal of the exemption, and, therefore, and upon that understanding which he had given him personally, and which he was glad to hear he now confirmed, he heartily supported this measure, which he believed would be a great step in the direction of making London a modern port.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars), as representing the Board of Trade, said that they had considered this Bill and had come to the conclusion that it must be opposed, and not only so but they had intimated to the various public bodies who had the right to ask their opinion that it was their intention to prevent the Bill being passed. He did not feel, however, that the pledge given in regard to the Bill bound him at all in regard to these proposals of his hon. friend. Everyone would agree that it was not the same Bill. He should like, if his hon. friend would permit him, to add to the congratulations which had already been bestowed upon him not only on account of his speech but still more for the credit which he deserved for having made a proposal which was really practical, and with the principle of which nearly all were in agreement. He felt, however, this difficulty, that owing to circumstances, for which the hon. Member was not in the least to blame, they did not have notice of the present proposal in time to consider it on its merits, but he dared say that there were many objections which they would have realised more fully if they had had time to thoroughly go into the matter. It was therefore for the House to decide whether or not this scheme deserved to be sent up to a Committee to be considered on its merits—personally, he thought it did. He was not going to reply at any length to the remarks of the hon. Member for Battersea. The hon. Member said that he would be glad if in regard to this question they adopted his advice; well, they did so. Another thing which rather pleased him in the hon. Member's speech was that although he said a great many hard things about the Government, he did not go quite the length that he went with regard to the Thames Conservancy, and did not propose to take them out and drown them. He gathered that it was a metaphorical expression, even in regard to the Thames Conservancy, though the hon. Member seemed to intimate that he had been doing his best to do the same in regard to the Government, but they on that side might have the satisfaction of knowing that there would be a good deal more dredging to be done before the hon. Member could succeed in his object.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that certainly the London County Council were not possessed of the craven fear of being great as the hon. Member said of the Government. Although the Government had spoken, he hoped the House would allow a man who had represented Tilbury Docks and the estuary of the Thames for fourteen years to say a few words. He thought it was rather hard that a trade which had not been consulted, and which did not want this deepening of the channel, should be made to pay for it. He alluded to the lighters and barges used in connection with the cement trade, of which there were about a thousand. They plied up and down the river drawing about seven feet of water, and they would get no benefit out of the change which was proposed. It was all very well for coal tramps and ocean liners which went to Tilbury Dock. They got advantage and they should pay for it. In the distressful county in which he had a seat one of the few successful trades was the cement trade on the banks of the Thames, and the members of that trade would receive with considerable disfavour any proposition of this kind, or any attempt to penalise them. Then as to sea walls, he might point out that a great part of the county of Essex was below the level of the German Ocean, and sea walls were necessary for their salvation. In the division he represented frequently in the middle of the night people used to be called up to repair the sea wall lest they should be drowned. On the estuary of the Thames the sea wall played a very important part. No man would knowingly take a farm with a sea wall upon it, and no man would take a farm when the sea wall was liable to the backwash of steamers passing up and down which they had not had before, but which they would have now. He thought the two classes he had mentioned should be specially protected.

***Sir JOHN BRUNNER** (Cheshire, Northwich) said he was heartily glad that there was to be an improvement in the River Thames, and he was very sorry that the Government apparently took so little interest in the matter. He had declared in that House more than once that he was very tired of the squandering of our national funds in different parts of the earth, and if the Government a good many years ago had made up their minds to improve the Thames instead of building a railway in Uganda, the Empire would have been greater to-day. He had to thank the chairman of the Thames Conservancy for bringing in this Bill, though he hoped he would forgive him for saying that the Thames Conservancy, as at present constituted, was not a body which should do the work. The House did not realise that the duties of the Thames Conservancy extended from keeping ditches in Gloucestershire in a sanitary condition down to the superintendence of the shrimping at Gravesend. We should never get this work done in a business-like way until we divided the Thames into two jurisdictions, with Teddington Lock as the dividing point. The Thames above and below that point was entirely different in its character. The Thames where it was a pleasure resort ought to be governed by a separate body and not by one which was interested in the London Docks and in trade. An hon. Member who had spoken a few minutes before spoke of the work which had been done at Antwerp, but the same story could be told about every nation in Europe, about our Colonies, and about the United States. Everywhere in the world except here the whole nation worked together. It was "all for all," and he hoped he might live to see the day when the House would rise to the height of their great responsibility, and that they would one and all join together in working for the benefit of the trade at home.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Captain JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) said he would not occupy them more than a minute in moving the instruction of which he had given notice. The clause from which the instruction was taken was embodied in the Port of London Bill which passed the Hybrid Committee. He therefore hoped the House would accept his Motion. He begged to move.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an instruction to the Committee on the Bill to insert a clause to provide that the Conservators of the River Thames shall make compensation to all persons whose property or works are damaged by or in consequence of any operations of the Conservators in connection with dredging or otherwise deepening and improving the channels within the limits defined by the Bill, and to provide that any dispute or difference arising therefrom shall be settled by arbitration under the Arbitration Act, 1889."—(*Captain Jessel.*)

Mr JOHN BURNS appealed to the House not to support the instruction. The residue of the Bill ought to go to the Committee unconditionally. The practice of moving instructions to Committees had gone too far, and in this case it was both unreasonable and unfair.

Question put, and negatived.

FINANCE BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [15th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

***Mr. CHANNING**, resuming his speech, said the main issue he desired to bring before the House was the relative incidence of taxation upon different classes of taxpayers. The additional expenditure of £50,000,0000 a year had been estimated to involve extra taxation to the extent of a penny per working day upon every man, woman, and child in the country. To the women employed in "closing" Army boots whose case had recently been brought to the notice of the House, whose wages were 6s. a week, this meant that one-twelfth of their wages was taken as a contribution towards the expenses of the State, or the equivalent of an income-tax of 18d. in the £. This, it should be remembered, was simply for the additional expenditure of the last few years apart from other taxes. Allowing for the repayment of capital charges for military and naval works, the total expenditure on war and armaments during the last ten years amounted to something like £400,000,000. Through the policy of war, expansion, and reckless Imperialism, the whole of that money had been thrown into the sea. Placed at 5 per cent. the mere interest on that sum would have provided universal old-age pensions for ever without any further appeal to the taxpayer. Invested in small holdings at rents representing 2 or 3 per cent. on the outlay, it would have added immensely to the happiness of the people and provided a revenue more than sufficient to clear away the sugar tax. Or if the interest had been applied to the relief of rates, one of the most pressing grievances of the people might have been removed for ever so far as the majority of the large towns were concerned. These were tremendous facts. The whole of this fund had been thrown into the abyss of extravagance, and not one penny would ever be recovered. And what had been the effect of the extravagance of the Government upon the value of securities? On Consols and the chief railway and colonial stocks there had been a decrease of some 26 per cent., which meant that in capital values an income of £10,000 in 1898 was now represented by only £7,400. For that the wealthy had to thank the Government. If that were the effect on the rich, how much more serious was the effect on the poor.

Even if the increased expenditure could be justified on the ground that the total wealth of the community had increased, it was absolutely unjust to raise so vast a sum without a scientific investigation and thorough readjustment of the incidence of taxation upon those who felt the burden most severely. It was no answer to say that the nation was rich enough. Even if that were true, how could it be just for the Government to go on increasing the burden without any regard for the people upon whom the burden pressed with unexampled and cruel severity. The small income-tax payers, and such people as those who made trousers at 2¼d. per pair, had a tremendous claim for consideration. There had been not only reckless extravagance, but a cruel negligence of the fact that they were asking the poor man to pay for extravagance which could enrich only the wealthy speculators and capitalists whose fortunes were advanced by adventures abroad. Income-tax payers, at any rate, knew what they were paying. Successive Chancellors of the Exchequer had declared that the income-tax ought not to be raised or maintained at so high a figure without some further extension of exemptions to persons of small incomes, and, as in former years, he should press strongly for some consideration of the claims of the small income-tax payers for further relief. The so-called equitable division between direct and indirect taxation was an absolute and transparent fallacy. What did it matter whether indirect taxation was 53 or 49 per cent. of the whole? What had to be considered was the proportion of income paid by the individual to the expenses of the State.

The recent Board of Trade inquiries into the wages and expenditure of the working classes afforded an admirable means of testing the actual incidence of indirect taxation. The Blue-book contained a very large number of family budgets, from which it appeared that upon wages of 21s. a week, the duties payable on tea, coffee, and sugar alone amounted to nearly 7d., or an income-tax of 6·3d. in the £. On wages of 52s. the same duties amounted to 11d., representing an income-tax of 4¼d. But the corresponding duties in the case of wealthy people represented an income-tax of only a penny in the pound on an income of £1,500, of ½d. in the £ on incomes between £3,000 and £4,000, and of ⅛d. in the £ on incomes of £20,000. Those figures illustrated the enormous pressure of indirect taxation upon the poor. Having regard to the enormously greater pressure of indirect taxation upon the poor, and especially upon the lowest grades of the wage-earning classes, it was an intolerable injustice that taxation should be raised to so high a point without some scientific inquiry into its incidence or the establishment of some machinery by which the pressure upon the poor might be mitigated. The enormous burdens imposed by the present rate of expenditure were not only ruinous to the country as a whole, but they pressed with such intolerable injustice upon certain sections of the community that he wondered the people did not rebel against them.

*Mr. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) desired to associate himself with those who had protested against the growing expenditure of the country. The fact that the ordinary expenditure of the country, not only on the Army and Navy, but on all the branches of the service had risen by over £50,000,000 in ten years was viewed with profound dissatisfaction throughout the country and had done more than almost anything else to alienate the people from the Unionist cause. With regard to the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for Ealing that an inner Committee of the Cabinet should be constituted to check expenditure, the record of the Cabinet in the matter of expenditure connected with the South African War was such that the country would have no confidence in their ability to form an effective check. A committee of business men, who had conducted great enterprises successfully, and whose whole training had been a matter of saving and reducing expenditure, would be a far better body for the purpose. Such men were available if only their services were sought; they desired no place or reward, but simply to place their experience and services at the disposal of the country. There was a feeling of deep dissatisfaction among the people that the Transvaal war contribution of £30,000,000 did not appear in the Finance Bill of the present year, and that the Government had not made that payment part and parcel of the new Constitution. It had been obtained from Parliament on the express condition that it would be repaid, and the late Colonial Secretary had expressly stated that it would be. The money ought to have been paid long ago, and on this point he dissociated himself entirely from those of his hon. friends who deprecated any demand being made upon the Transvaal for payment. In opposition to their views he preferred to take the opinion of the highest experts as to the riches of the Transvaal. From the highest sources calculations had been made that £2,781,000,000 sterling of gold had been proved to exist by borings in the Transvaal, which was sufficient, at the present output, to last for 150 years. He had no hesitation in saying that the Transvaal was able to pay not only £30,000,000, but £100,000,000. By the substitution of British for Boer rule a saving was being effected in the Transvaal of £4,800,000 a year. The Transvaal gold mineowners had got that, but where was the indemnity? This indemnity ought to have been paid by this time.

He regretted that no proposal had been made to abolish the coal export duty, and this in spite of the condemnation of this tax by the Royal Commission appointed to consider the whole question. He heard on a former occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, advance his reasons for imposing the duty on coal, and he stated that they were getting perilously near exhausting their coal supply. What did they find? The Royal Commission had concluded that there was at the present time a coal supply which would last this country at the present rate of output of 230,000,000 tons yearly for not less than 450 years, and with other forms of fuel now being used the probable duration of the supply might be considerably extended. The Royal Commission had also reported against the export duty on coal. The facts he had stated showed that there was absolutely no need to restrict the exportation of coal. The price of coal had fallen since the duty was imposed by 4s. and 5s. a ton, and they were losing a large proportion of the export coal trade of this country. To France alone last year 432,000 tons of coal less were sent from this country whilst Germany had sent 500,000 tons more to France during the same period. That fact alone showed the great injury which was being caused to the coal trade. The tax was a very heavy direct tax upon labour, for it should be remembered that 800,000 persons were employed in the coal trade, and they were paid £40,000,000 sterling in wages annually. That was a fact which ought to have made hon. Members think twice before imposing an export duty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol stated that although freights had gone up yet the prices of coal had also kept up, and therefore argued that they could quite easily bear another shilling of export duty. He would give the House the converse of that, because now the rate of freight had fallen 50 per cent., and yet the price of coal had fallen as well. He thought they had a right to ask why the Government had not considered the abolition of this duty, which was an interference with the principles of free trade, in fact, it was a direct preferential tariff in favour of foreign as compared with British coal. For these reasons he entered his protest against the Bill.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) said that national expenditure was not in any sense a Party question, and the object on both sides of the House ought to be to secure for the overburdened British taxpayer the best value for his money. Judging by the number of empty benches on both sides of the House, when they were considering a Finance Bill, which provided for an expenditure of £161,000,000 sterling, it was certainly true that this House had become defunct, and the sooner it was reinvigorated by a general election the better it would be for economy and retrenchment in national expenditure. This question of increase in expenditure was one which it was their duty to examine even in the presence of empty benches. An increase in ten years of £58,000,000 in a time of peace was certainly a matter that ought to cause great alarm. This year the normal expenditure was £10,500,000 greater than it was in 1902-3. A great many powerful arguments had been advanced in favour of more rapidly reducing the National Debt in order to restore their national credit. He was still more anxious that they should reduce national expenditure, which was, after all, the foundation of national debt. Reference had been made to the increase of £6,000,000 upon the Education Vote. It might be true that they were not getting value for their money in regard to this increased expenditure upon education, but having regard to the enormous increase in the expenditure upon the Army and Navy from £35,500,000 to £71,250,000 in time of peace, he submitted that this increase in the Education Vote was insignificant, and in his opinion the money spent upon education was the best spent money in the whole of the Budget. That reminded him of an incident at a Scotch election, where the candidate was heckled by being asked—

> "Am I to understand, Sorr, that whilst you are prepared to spend £31,000,000 over the Army and Navy, you are only willin' to spend £8,000,000 on education—that is, £31,000,000 for blawin' brains oot and only £8,000,000 for pittin' brains in."

It was upon maintaining a high standard of education that the prosperity of a country mainly depended, both commercially and otherwise. They had heard a great deal lately of fiscal proposals to promote the commercial prosperity of this country, but what they were more in need of was to have set up a higher and more efficient system of education. He hoped that the expenditure upon education would not be stinted, and that expenditure upon the Army and Navy would go down. They had had from the Prime Minister the other day an interesting statement in regard to the Committee of Defence. He should have thought that that Committee would not only have had to put before the House hypothetically cases of possible attempts at invasion, and the view taken by the Government of India as to the defence of the North-West Frontier, but that they would also have put before them some statement as to how to provide for the defence of the Empire at the least possible cost to the taxpayers of this country, and also have indicated how they could reduce the enormous expenditure upon the Army and Navy, which had now reached £71,250,000. It was a remarkable fact that while the expenditure on the British Army had gone up during the last fifteen years no less than £16,000,000 sterling, on the other hand the expenditure of the armies of France and Germany combined had diminished £5,500,000 during the same period. Not only had they to consider the interests of the taxpayers of this country, but they had also to pay some regard to the taxpayers of India. He would suggest to the Prime Minister that the attention of the Imperial Defence Committee might very well have been directed not only to the question of Russia passing through Afghanistan—that great mountainous region—in her advance upon India, but also to the question as to whether it was not advisable to further safeguard British interests in Persia, because it was through Persia that Russia would advance if she advanced at all.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in order in discussing that subject now.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON said he thought the debate at the morning sitting was allowed to extend to the speech of the Prime Minister, and it would be remembered that the question of the defence of India and Canada was considerably debated.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Yes, it is true that those questions were debated, but it was in regard to the expenditure upon the Army.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON said he was only pointing out that the best way to meet the danger of an invasion of India by Russia was to safeguard and maintain British interests in Persia.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! I hope the hon. Member will not continue arguing with the Chair.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON said that what they needed was a much more stringent examination of national expenditure in every department. They had been promised a day for the discussion of expenditure on the Public Accounts Committee, and he would like the Prime Minister to inform them when he was prepared to grant that day. The Committee on National Expenditure in 1902 made a strong recommendation that in order to reduce excessive expenditure each of the four great classes of Estimates should be considered, one class being taken each year, and they recommended that those Estimates should be subjected to the closest examination. That recommendation had not been acted upon. There was no question whatever now that the expenditure upon the Army and Navy had risen to a point at which they were not getting value for their money. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the amount of money spent upon the Army might safely be reduced if the War Office only laid out the money to the best advantage, and in this way the strength of the Army could be increased.

With regard to the financial statement he found that the revenue last year, but for the fact that the expenditure was £924,000 less than the estimate, and the fact that £800,000 of arrears of income-tax were got in amounting together to £1,750,000, instead of a surplus of £1,400,000, they would have had to face a deficit of £300,000. The Estimates for this year showed a reduction of £3,500,000 in regard to the Navy, and yet there had been no reduction in national expenditure. They needed a more definite and fuller statement as to how it came about when the country was groaning beneath the burden of taxation that some greater effort had not been made to reduce the expenditure upon the Army and in other directions in order to lessen the great burden which the trade and commerce of this country was suffering under. This expenditure was largely unproductive, and it limited the productive power of the people in a way that was most injurious to the prosperity of the home trade. They were told that the remedy was to criticise the Estimates more than they did, but the House would recollect that when they attempted to do that they were closured and millions of money were passed through every year in this way without being criticised in this House. They would never secure retrenchment until some more earnest effort was made by the House when considering the Estimates and when considering the Finance Bill to insist upon reductions. Although the first £10,000,000 of the Transvaal loan had not been paid, he thought the Government might very well direct their attention to making the Transvaal and the Orange Free State bear the cost of the British garrison now quartered there. Did they wish to treat India worse than South Africa? India paid the entire cost of the British garrison. Why should South Africa not pay the £2,500,000 which was spent upon the British garrison which was maintained in South Africa for the benefit of the people there?

The coal tax had been referred to, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had expressed the opinion that a more suitable occasion to deal with that question would be in Committee. Perhaps he might be allowed to state that he intended putting down a new clause on the Committee stage of this Bill dealing with that question, and therefore he would not deal further with that subject to-night. The coal tax was a tax upon export coal only and no corresponding tax was put upon any other great industry. The coal tax was obviously and flagrantly unjust, and other means might be found for raising revenue, while this and indirect taxation which pressed heavily on the working classes might be abolished. Adjustment was needed between direct and indirect taxation, and though the Finance Bill remitted taxation fairly between the two sources the gross injustice of 1902–3 had yet to be remedied. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he had the good fortune to be in office next year and had a balance in hand, would not leave out of consideration the injustices to which he had alluded.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said that as was declared in the terms of an Amendment of which he had given notice though he could not move it, the finances of the country could not be safely or satisfactorily administered by a Chancellor of the Exchequer who publicly repudiated the fiscal system under which he was compelled to administer such finances. He might say at once that he did not intend to refer in any way to the fiscal question; neither had he the slightest intention of making any personal attack upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had been perfectly straightforward, but his position was an improper one from a practical point of view and constitutionally unsound. A Chancellor in a free-trade Administration, he brought in a Finance Bill in accordance with the views of his colleagues and yet he had publicly repudiated free-trade principles. To the taxes he was imposing he preferred others which would have the magical character that they would be paid by nobody and benefit everybody. He imposed the income-tax, tea, sugar, and tobacco taxes until foolish constituencies would consent to taxes on food. This was bad from a practical point of view. This was only the right hon. Gentleman's second best kind of Budget, and it was not the best which the Chancellor of the Exchequer believed he could produce if he had a free hand. He did not like second-rate articles, whether they were produced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer or anybody else, but if the right hon. Gentleman had only second-rate articles to give them then they wanted to be sure that it was the best he had got in his possession. Although they thought that everything which was protectionist was bad, it did not follow that everything which was free trade was necessarily good. If a doctor used drugs in which he did not believe he should be sorry for the patient. That was analogous to the position of the right hon. Gentleman, because he was using principles on which he based the Finance Bill in which he did not believe at the present time. Therefore the finance of the country could not be safely administered under such circumstances.

In the cynical manner in which the Government managed these matters one did not know what would happen. The Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland believed in devolution but managed Ireland on Unionist lines; a protectionist Chancellor of the

Exchequer brought in a Budget on free-trade lines; and the Secretary of State for War brought in Estimates which conflicted with the statement made the other day by the Prime Minister. In fact, it seemed to him that the principles which a Minister was most strongly opposed to were the principles which he was called upon to defend in the House. The right hon. Gentleman was not speaking from a brief in this House, and he would ask whether he was not now defending a Bill which was founded on principles which he had denounced as principles which ought to be abolished. From the practical point of view, therefore, he thought the present position was invidious. No man ought to be called upon to defend a Bill which was founded on principles which he did not absolutely believe in. What, for instance, would be thought of the present Government if they were to appoint Dr. Clifford as Minister of Education, and Dr. Clifford were to bring in a Bill to coerce Wales? There was one supposition which he had not dealt with, namely, that it was possible that before bringing in this Finance Bill the right hon. Gentleman had changed his views with regard to the fiscal question. They were told that there had been a great deal of change on the other side of the House lately. When gentlemen went to the Treasury they were sometimes imbued with protectionist views, but they very often changed their views with regard to these matters. That might be the case with the right hon. Gentleman. If it was so all he could do was to congratulate him and withdraw everything he had said. Looking at the situation from the constitutional point of view he should like to know how far the right hon. Gentleman was justified in bringing in a Bill based on principles of which he disapproved. That was a question of some difficulty, and he did not wish to speak in any dogmatic manner upon it, but so far as he knew there was no parallel in history for the present position. It was true that when Sir Robert Peel abolished the Corn Laws he was elected as a protectionist, but when he did abolish them he had been converted and spoke as a free-trader. This constitutional point of view must have occurred to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he should be very glad indeed to hear what he had to say about it. Until he heard the defence he must say that the present position was not only dangerous but constitutionally incorrect.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the object of the speech to which the House had just listened was apparently to convince the House that he was not a fit and proper person to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. On that question it would be unbecoming in him to express any opinion. It was one to be decided by the Prime Minister in the first place, and by the House of Commons in the second place. If they were content to give him their confidence he was proud to be permitted to discharge the functions of that office.

The most remarkable thing about the debate was the area it had covered and the wide scope of the speeches made. It would be improper that he should follow in detail the arguments of hon. Gentlemen on one side or the other in regard to our strategical position in every portion of the globe, or deal with the character of the attack to which the British Empire in its different portions was liable, or with the nature of the preparation we should make for it. The only possible justification for introducing these topics was the allegation that after the speech made by his right hon. friend the Prime Minister in the discussion of the Defence Committee the other day it was no longer necessary to provide the ways and means which were the basis of the present Budget, and that our naval and military Estimates ought to be, but had not been, revised in the light of the principles laid down by his right hon. friend on that occasion. He noted in passing an observation made by his noble friend the Member for Ealing, from which he appeared to think that, by the establishment of the Committee of Defence, his right hon. friend had taken away the Cabinet's old authority for naval and military finance. It would have been impossible for his noble friend to have advanced that argument if he had read or considered the speech of the Prime Minister. Nothing was more clear from that speech than that the authority of the Cabinet was maintained unimpaired, and that the Defence Committee in no way derogated from the authority of the Cabinet, but was rather a means of gathering and digesting information for the consideration of the Cabinet in order that the Cabinet might more easily arrive at a correct conclusion.

The right hon. Member for Cambridge University said that after the speech of the Prime Minister he did not see why as a humble taxpayer he should be required to pay more for the Army this year than last year. The most casual study of the speech should disclose at once the cause of the increase in the military expenditure this year. It was wholly due to the determination of the Government to rearm the artillery rapidly and pay for that rearmament as fast as the guns were received from the contractors. As long as hon. Gentlemen thought it was the intention either not to rearm the artillery or to postpone the payment, they were ready to denounce the Government for not doing what it now appeared the Government had done. The right hon. Member for Cambridge University drew an altogether erroneous and illegitimate inference after stating imperfectly and inaccurately the purpose of the Prime Minister's argument. The statement of the Prime Minister as to the impossibility or great difficulty of invasion was based expressly upon our having the force to resist invasion. His right hon. friend guarded himself and endeavoured to guard the House against the possibility of falling into misconception as to allowing any great reduction in the military forces which we had to maintain. The right hon. Member for Cambridge appeared to think that the defence of India was easier now than twenty years ago; but he ignored the whole change of circumstances which had taken place since that time, and which had not tended to make the task of defending our frontier a lighter one. That being the case, it was obvious we must maintain a large force. You could not improvise an Army in these days, officers and men, guns, and the many stores that were required. All these things must be the result of careful and deliberate preparation in time of peace; and to lay themselves down to rest with the comfortable security which the right hon. Gentleman would have them feel that there would always be time after war had broken out to make the necessary preparations was not only to court obvious military disaster, but, what was more germane to the present purpose, to prepare for ourselves or our successors the most terrible financial disaster. Preparations made in haste were always doubly or trebly costly, and could not be as efficient as if undertaken at the present time. The great reductions of which some hon. Members loosely spoke would be found to be impossible of execution if ever they should be charged with the responsibility of considering what was necessary for the defence of the Empire.

The second subject raised was the financial control exercised over the various Departments of Government. Such control as the House exercised over the Estimates, though it might be effective in regard to policy, was not in these days likely to contribute to reduction of expenditure. The hon. Member for the Dumfries Burghs suggested that a series of Committees of the House should be constantly examining the Estimates with a view to securing reductions in them. But the Committees which were appointed on the initiative of Lord Randolph Churchill for this purpose resulted, not in a reduction, but in an increase of the expenditure of the Departments inquired into. The noble Lord the Member for Ealing suggested that a Finance Committee of the Cabinet should be appointed on the same lines as the Defence Committee. Apart from the abolition of the Treasury and the making of such provision as would be due to the distinguished officials of the State whose work would be taken off their hands, a Committee of that kind would not give to the Chancellor of the Exchequer any greater control over finance than he now possessed, or place at his disposal any greater means for checking the demands of Departments. Besides, if given effect to, it would still further overwork Cabinet Ministers, and would tend to render Cabinet Government unworkable in the present pressure of business. It was only because the responsibility was mainly concentrated on individuals, and that a great portion of the work was done for individuals, that Ministers were able to get through the enormous amount of work which the Cabinet had to consider in these days. If there were any defects in the control exercised, the machinery at their disposal was sufficient in wise hands to provide effective control. The kind of inquiry which the noble Lord suggested into the demands of other Departments was constantly undertaken either by himself personally or in collaboration with his colleagues and other persons, not members of the Cabinet, believed to be desirable owing to their special knowledge, or by the officers of the Treasury acting under his directions. There was a periodical review, and the continuity of information desired was secured by the knowledge possessed by the Treasury officials, as well as by the information freely placed at their disposal.

As to the statement that taxation was unfairly proportioned between the direct and indirect taxpayers, the proportion paid by the latter was very much lower than it had been at any time when the Party opposite were in power. In 1894–5 the indirect taxation was 54·6 per cent. of the whole; and according to the Estimates of the present year it would be only 49·8 per cent.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said that his contention was that, as direct and indirect taxation had been equally imposed during the war, they ought to have been equally remitted after the war.

Mr. McKENNA asked whether in the figures just given the coal tax was included.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the coal tax was obviously excluded. [Cries of "Why?"] As to the point of the hon. Member for Barnsley when taxation was remitted, it must be remitted in the light of the facts and conditions of the moment. It was impossible and absurd to go back to the earliest times of financial history to see how taxation stood then.

The criticism of the Budget was summed up in the allegation that the provision made for the reduction of the Debt was not enough, or that our borrowings were too large. Yet the proportion which the Sinking Fund now bore to the aggregate debt was higher than it had been in any but two of the last fifteen years. Not only the capacity of the taxpayer to bear the burden, but the amount of the burden to be borne, must be taken into account; and between these two considerations he had held the scales fairly, and, while increasing the amount set apart for the payment of debt, he had given some relief to the taxpayer. It was said that the pressure of this taxation was specially hard on the very poor. and on the small income-tax payer; but both classes would be the greatest beneficiaries in the relief given by the present Budget. He hoped the House would now come to a decision on a Bill which in its main principles and provisions had met with general acceptance.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said that those who had experience of the House must have heard with surprise the observations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he endeavoured to set aside certain criticisms which had been offered in the course of the debate as not germane to this Bill. It had been the universal practice of the House to regard every subject as germane on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had asked to be excused from replying to a number of comments on account of the lateness of the hour, but on the Opposition side of the House they were not to blame for the want of time at his disposal. They ought to be allowed sufficient time for discussion, because this was in all probability the last Budget which would be proposed by the Party opposite in this Parliament.

Reference had frequently been made to the increase in capital expenditure by the present Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated in his Budget speech that he could only give a provisional estimate of the amount required for additional capital expenditure in the current year, and he put it at £9,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman further stated that he would be able at a later date to give full details of that expenditure. Surely this was the occasion on which the House should have had from the

Chancellor of the Exchequer the further particulars which he promised. How was it possible for the House to consider the expenditure of the year unless they were supplied with this information? The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew very well that the two important purposes for which this capital expenditure was to be incurred were military and naval works, and he knew also that such expenditure was nothing more nor less than expenditure ancillary to that provided for in the ordinary Estimates of the year for the Army and Navy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be able to say within a couple of millions what the expenditure on the Army and Navy for the year would be. It was not treating the House fairly not to give that information. This process of delaying the details of expenditure had been going from bad to worse during the past ten years. This year they were to have a Military Works Bill and a Naval Works Bill, and yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer when making his general proposals did not tell the House what amount of money would be required for these purposes, nor did he state when the Bills would be introduced. In regard to these most important matters they would have to deal with a supplementary Budget later, but at present they knew nothing of the details of the proposals.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was not in a position to give the hon. Gentleman any further figures at present. The details of the Military Works Bill and the Naval Works Bill were being considered. He had given what he hoped would be the outside figure.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked how much of the £9,000,000 was for military works and how much for naval works.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had given his best estimate of what were likely to be the total requirements. He could not give separate estimates for the different services at the present time.

Mr. BUCHANAN thought the House ought to have had the particulars before now. Until two years ago they had always had them earlier. They had always in the past had an estimate of the amount required for military and naval works, but this year they had not had it, and it showed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not exercise his control over the Departments in the proper manner. Surely what his predecessor was able to do the present Chancellor of the Exchequer should do. If anything the estimate of the amount this year would be easier than it would have been in previous years. He agreed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the only person who should control the expenditure of the country and control the excessive demands on the part of the spending Departments. His desire was to increase the responsibility of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order that he might resist the demands of his colleagues.

There had been as yet no answer to the question as to how far these Estimates were consistent with the speech of the Prime Minister last Thursday. What, they wanted to know, were to be the financial consequences of the speech of the Prime Minister? The Secretary of State for War had told them that during the last two years the Estimates for the Army were provisional, and then the Prime Minister came down and gave them a scheme of Imperial defence. Yet no proposal was made to adapt the Army Estimates to this scheme of national and Imperial defence. The moral was that we had wasted month in and month out millions of money. Who was responsible for it? The Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, during two successive years, proposed an expenditure upon the Army which the Government were not themselves prepared to support. One of the faults which they had to find with the general finance of the Government during the years that had passed was that there was no stability in regard to their finances, and they took no step for laying their policy before the country. Last year they put 2d. on tea, and this year they took it off. A year ago they took 4d. off the income-tax and then they put 1d. on, and year after year they were altering their policy. Then in regard to the South African War debt, for which the Government were responsible, the Government did not come and lay before the House or the country a settled scheme for dealing with the grave financial condition in which the country found itself at the conclusion of the struggle. There was a vast and increasing debt, and those who were responsible for the finances of the country should have come before them and told them of the greatness of the burden, and of the necessity of getting rid of it. If they had asked the country to submit for a longer period to the war tax he believed the country would have assented to it. But no such scheme was submitted, and they had to go on bearing the war tax without any decrease whatever. For these reasons he thought that the general scheme of the Government for the management of the finances of the country had been by no means worthy of the confidence of the nation.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said the recent speech of the Prime Minister was really a declaration of policy upon which could be founded a good case for a reduction of expenditure, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had now watered it down until it meant nothing at all. The Prime Minister had said that we were practically safe from invasion so long as we kept our Navy up to its present strength, and everybody at once declared that it afforded grounds for reducing the Army so far as it was required for the defence of these shores. The only purpose for which the Prime Minister suggested it might be wanted was in connection with India. But who was going to attack us in India ? The military problem had been considerably modified by the fate which had come upon Russia in the present war, and the idea of being frightened now with regard to that Power was preposterous. On these grounds the country had a right to expect considerable reductions in Army expenditure. But in the Estimates of the present year there was a decrease of £3,500,000 for the Navy, and an increase for the Army. Did the Prime Minister really mean business, or were the people building their hopes on the sand ? If the Prime Minister's speech meant what the country had taken it to mean, the Army Estimates ought to be framed in accordance with the policy then enunciated, and the result would be a considerable reduction.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 155 ; Noes, 99. (Division List No. 160.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r)
Balfour,RtHnGerald W.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Rt.Hon. Sir John C.R.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb.Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford,Sir William Theodore.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes,RtHn.AilwynEdward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster,Philip S.(Warwick,S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir AugustusFrederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Goschen, Hon.George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green,Walford D.(Wednesbury
Greene, SirE W(B'rySEdm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton Marq.of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk.R.(Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, SirJames(Staffords.NW
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn.Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence,SirJoseph(M'nmouth

Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks.N.R
Lee, ArthurH. (Hants.Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN.S.
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S.
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie, Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, SirLewis(EdinburghW
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.JH (Dumfriesshire
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, Edw.(Fermanagh,N.)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel,Hn. Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Rt HnJ.Parker(Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W.F.D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt.Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J.M'Taggart
Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Frank
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, K. (TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Richards,Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Woodhouse, Sir JT (Huddersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at eighteen minutes before One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 17th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords] (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords]. Considered; to be read the third time.

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).

Colonel BOWLES reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills; That the parties opposing the North Eastern Railway Bill had stated that the evidence of Captain John Whitby Dixon, R.N., was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Captain John Whitby Dixon, R.N., do attend the said Committee this day at Three of the clock.

Ordered, That Captain John Whitby Dixon, R.N., do attend the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills, this day at Three of the clock.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Sir HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That the parties promoting the Metropolitan Pneumatic Despatch Bill had stated that the evidence of Thomas Waghorn Elford Higgens, Borough Surveyor, Town Hall, Chelsea, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said T. W. E. Higgens do attend the said Committee To-morrow, at Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That T. W. E. Higgens do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills To-morrow, at Eleven of the clock.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).

Mr. TATTON EGERTON reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That the parties promoting the Cork Junction Railways Bill had stated that the evidence of Mr. William S. Green, of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Mr. William S. Green do attend the said Committee on Tuesday, May 23rd, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Mr. William S. Green do attend the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills on Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Liverpool Corporation Bill. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Skegness Water Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Reported from the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table

Bill to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Petition from Inverness, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS (PROTECTION) BILL.

Petition from Yorkshire, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from St. Leonard's-on-Sea, against; to lie upon the Table.

MILK DEPOTS (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TEINDS AND FIARS PRICES (SCOTLAND).

Petition from Inverness, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MEDICAL DEPARTMENT).

Copy presented, of Report for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 8th May; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 167.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3375 and 3376 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AMERICAN MAILS.

Return ordered, "showing the number of days, hours, and minutes occupied in the transit of the Royal Mails, both outward and inward, carried during the year 1904 by Steamships between Queenstown and New York, between Southampton and New York, and between New York and Plymouth. The Return to specify the names of the Steamers and to indicate by asterisk or otherwise those not carrying Mails under contract."—(*Sir John Leng.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Proclaimed Meeting at Capatagle—Police and Mr. Roche, M.P.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has now received any further information in reference to the action of the police at the Capatagle meeting; and whether he will take steps to secure that accurate information shall be supplied to him in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have received the following report from the County Inspector of Constabulary, to whom this Question was referred:—"No violence was used by the police. Mr. Roche persisted in maintaining that he had a right to address his constituents and he was moved away from the crowd by my orders. I had first informed him that the meeting was proclaimed and that I had a copy of a proclamation which I would give him. I gave it to him when he had been moved about twenty-five yards away. He was not dragged, nor was he moved off his feet. One policeman held him by each arm. District Inspector Heard did not order his men to drag Mr. Roche down. I was the very first person to go to Mr. Roche and tell him he could not address the meeting, and when he began to argue that he had arranged two months before to address his constituents, I took hold of his coat and pulled him off the stile, about eighteen inches from the ground, on which he was standing. Mr. Heard, I think, also caught his coat and said he must come down. No roughness was used, when pulled he stepped off. I then told him he must move on and told the crowd to disperse. He was moved on as I have already mentioned. He was not moved fifty yards, not quite thirty yards. I heard him say, 'Is the county inspector here'? I did not tell the police to let him go. When they had moved him from the crowd they loosed their hold of his arms. There were no reporters present or regular representatives of the Press. Mr. Roche says he held on to the platform. There was no platform. There was a proclamation posted on the wall opposite Mr. Roche, not twelve feet from him. Mr. Roche must have been well aware the meeting was proclaimed. He had been staying the night with Father Fahy, and I myself had told Father Fahy of the proclamation. The police did nothing that was not perfectly consistent with their duty in preventing the holding of the meeting, and no violence was used to Mr. Roche nor any rough treatment that could be construed as violence."

Surgeons in the Royal Navy.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Amiralty whether it is intended to alter the conditions of service of surgeons in the Royal Navy by abolishing the present system of making appointments for twelve months only; and, if so, when details of the new scheme will be announced.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) No change is anticipated in the present regulations, but the Question seems to be asked under a misapprehension, as appointments are not now made for twelve months only.

Turbary Trustees on the King-Harman Estate.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state why the Estates Commissioners, in reply to a memorial, have refused to hear by counsel and solicitor the objections of a number of tenants on the King-Harman Estate to the appointment of certain turbary trustees; why have the Estates Commissioners selected as trustees parties named at private meetings from which the tenants generally were excluded; and whether he can state if the Estates Commissioners are prepared to make arrangements for a free election by ballot of turbary trustees by the tenants on the estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they did not consider that any useful purpose would be served by hearing counsel. Their negotiator and their inspector made exhaustive inquiries and held interviews with many persons, deputations, and largely attended meetings of delegates and persons interested as to the persons to act as trustees and the methods of selecting them. After full consideration the negotiator and the inspector recommended the persons who were finally approved of by the Commissioners in a scheme which was sanctioned by the Lord-Lieutenant.

Report of Medical Officer of Health for the Parish of Uig, Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if the medical officer of health for the parish of Uig, Island of Lewis, will be requested to send in his report in future sufficiently early to enable the county medical officer of health to include it in his annual report.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) It is desirable that reports of the nature referred to should be sent in early, and the Secretary for Scotland will request the Local Government Board to communicate in this sense with the local authority.

Annual Income of Trusts appointed under the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the annual income of the respective trusts appointed under the provisions of The Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, 1882.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am unable at present to give the information desired by the hon. Member. The Scotch Education Department, however, have already made arrangements for obtaining it, but it cannot be completely obtained till the close of the financial year at May next. When this is done the Department will communicate with the hon. Member.

Sunday Duty of Glasgow Female Telephone Staff.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received a memorial from the female telephone staff at Glasgow protesting against being called on duty on Sunday; and, seeing that the male staff are anxious to take up the duty, will he consider the expediency of making such arrangements as will release the female staff at Glasgow from Sunday work.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have received the memorial, and I informed the memorialists in October last that I see no good reason for relieving them of the Sunday duty, which comes round to each operator about one Sunday in every eight.

Holidays in lieu of Bank Holiday — Case of Mr. Alexander, Telegraphist, of Manchester.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the arrangements made in the telegraph department providing that if the staff work on bank holidays they receive a day in the winter as compensation, and of the rule that if an officer falls sick and cannot perform duty on the dates selected in the winter as his compensation days for bank holiday he loses the holiday, he will state if he has had the circumstances attending the bank holiday periods of Mr. Alexander, telegraphist, of Manchester, laid before him; and, if so, whether the local decision in his case was in accordance with the usual regulations.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Mr. Alexander appealed to me in March, 1904, and I personally considered the matter. I am not prepared to reconsider my decision, which was in accordance with the general rule applied in the case of an officer who falls sick when on leave.

Inquiries for Next of Kin of the late Helen Blake.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state whether any sums of money have been allowed out of the estate of the late Helen Blake, for the prosecution of inquiries in Ireland as to the next of kin of the deceased; and, if so, by whom these inquiries were conducted, where, and when; and if he will state the sum expended on them.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) No sums of money have been allowed out of the estate of the late Helen Blake for the prosecution of inquiries in Ireland as to the next of kin of the deceased.

Drainage Charge on Holding of Mr. Lawrence Hughes, of Derrycassan, County Cavan.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the Board of Public Works in Ireland is pressing for a drainage charge alleged to be due on the holding of a Mr. Lawrence Hughes, of Derrycassan, Ballyconnell, county Cavan; and whether, in view of the fact that this farm is practically undrained, the Board will send an inspector to make a report before further proceeding in this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I have inquired into the circumstances of this case, and they do not appear to me to justify the suspension of the legal proceedings which have been instituted.

Abstractors and Assistant Clerks in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury the number of Abstractors (Old Class) employed in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen, the number promoted, and the number in receipt of allowances of £20 per annum; the number of assistant clerks (New Class) in this department, the number eligible for promotion, and the number promoted; what prospects are held out to the assistant clerks (New Class) in this department, seeing that the allowances granted to the Abstractors (Old Class) in 1898 are not to be extended to them, and that the initial salary of an assistant clerk (New Class) is only £55 per annum.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) There are eight of the Abstractors (Old Class) with long service in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen. Seven of these have received allowances of £20 per annum within the maximum scale of their class. Six of the Senior Abstractors have been exceptionally promoted to the second division.

There are twenty-eight assistant clerks (Abstractor Class), nine of these are qualified as regards length of service, together with the eight of the old class, for promotion to the second division. Assistant clerks (Abstractor Class) rise to a maximum of £150 a year, subject to an efficiency bar at £100. Under the Order in Council of November, 1898, they are eligible in very special cases, after not less than six years service, for exceptional promotion, when vacancies occur, to the second division.

Immigrant Tax on Entry into United States, Calais, and Boulogne.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if all alien passengers landing in the United States have to pay the two-dollar tax levied on immigrants for the expenses of the immigrant service, or if it is confined to such immigrants; and if an admission fee is levied on all passengers landing at Boulogne and Calais.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) All alien passengers, except citizens of the Dominion of Canada, Cuba, or Mexico, have to pay the two-dollar tax on entrance into the United States unless in transit to some other country. A fee of 1 fr. 75 c. is levied on all passengers landing at Boulogne and Calais, excepting persons holding through tickets to Belgium and Germany.

Uncertified Deaths in Ireland.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of uncertified deaths in Ireland for each year since 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The numbers of deaths from uncertified causes in Ireland were as follows:—

In the year 1900	26,614
„ 1901	20,527
„ 1902	21,461
„ 1903	21,873
„ 1904	22,481

Punishment of Refractory Chinese Coolies in the Transvaal.

Mr. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will take steps to ascertain whether in some of the compounds in South Africa Chinese who refuse to go down the mines unless paid 2s. per day are tied up to a pole by their pigtails and then thrashed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) If the hon. Member will satisfy me that there is even a *prima facie* authenticity in this story I will make inquiry respecting it.

British Indians in Cape Colony—Language Question.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Bill recently introduced into the Cape Parliament limiting traders to the use of certain European languages will, in effect, inflict any disability on British Indians resident in Cape Colony which is not inflicted on Yiddish-speaking aliens; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I would point out that the provision in the Bill as introduced is not compulsory, as suggested in the hon. Member's Question. I am not, therefore, in a position to say whether the Bill will have such an effect, until it is passed and a case of the kind arises under it.

James Cox, late Inniskilling Fusiliers.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of James Cox, a shoemaker, who enlisted at Longford, on 18th August, 1882, in the Inniskilling Fusiliers, and was subsequently discharged after four years and ninety-eight days service at Port Lewis, after an attack of fever, as medically unfit for further service, and who received a pension of 6d. a day down to 1896, since which he got nothing; and whether, in view of this man's circumstances, he will cause some grant to be made to him or restore the pension of 6d. a day for a time to tide him over present illness.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This man's application for a renewal of pension has been considered by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, who state that he is not eligible for any further grant. There is no fund from which he could be awarded assistance.

Alleged Dissatisfaction among Men of the Army Service Corps at Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst the men of the Army Service Corps stationed at Longford in consequence of the manner in which an officer treats the men; and whether he will undertake to convey to this officer that excess of disciplinary zeal of this kind is not desirable.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Diciplinary questions of this nature rest entirely within the discretion of the local military authorities, with which I am not prepared to interfere.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Militia Training—Lanarkshire Regiments.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the advisory board in connection with the Militia regiments have come to a resolution that it is desirable that county Militia battalions should be trained in the counties to which they belong; and, if so, will he arrange that in future the 3rd and 4th battalions Scottish Rifles, and the 3rd and 4th battalions Highland Light Infantry, which are the four battalions connected with Lanarkshire, will be trained as heretofore at Lanark instead of at Irvine, where they have been ordered.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): Training arrangements are in the hands of the General Officers Commanding in Chief, who must necessarily be guided by various considerations when deciding on the locality most suitable. A general principle is that training should, if practicable, take place in the locality of the unit at least once in three years.

Native Labour in the South African Mines.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has now received information in reference to the circular of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, dated 17th March, in which it was stated that in future no natives would be recruited in Basutoland and Orange River Colony, except for a period of not less than twelve months; and, if so, what action he proposes to take in the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have now received the report of the executive committee of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, dated 13th April, which contains the following statement:—"Instructions have been issued to the agents of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association in Cape Colony, Orange River Colony, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Rhodesia that in future natives must be engaged for a period of twelve months for underground work, and in the Transvaal and Swaziland for a minimum of eight months. This will remove the disadvantage previously experienced of the boys' engagements expiring shortly after they have received sufficient training to enable them to perform their work satisfactorily." Previously the minimum period in the case of Basutoland and the Orange River Colony was four months. But the natives arriving from their homes and offering their services locally are to be engaged for a minimum period of three months. I do not propose to take any action in the matter.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Will not that tend to limit the number of Kaffir labourers engaged in the mines?

[The Answer was inaudible.]

Indian Army Administration.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India in regard to the correspondence on the subject of Indian Army administration which has recently passed between His Majesty's Government and the Indian

Government, whether he will say if the subject matter of that correspondence has, so far as concerns the respective authority and responsibilities of the members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, been fully considered by the Council of India here, pursuant to the procedure prescribed in Sections 23 and 24 of the Statute (21 and 22 Vic.) of 1858; and will that correspondence, or its essential portions, be placed before both Houses of Parliament at an early date, together with any dissents that may have been recorded by members of the Councils of India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): As I stated in answer to a Question on the 4th instant†, the subject of Indian Army administration is now under the consideration of His Majesty's Government. The provisions of the Act of Parliament mentioned in the hon. Member's Question, with regard to the Council of India have been and will be, as a matter of course, strictly observed. Papers will be presented to Parliament without avoidable delay, but I am unable at present to name any date for this.

Metropolitan Police—Regulation of Motor Traffic.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the instructions issued to the Metropolitan Police with respect to persons driving motor-cars on public highways recklessly or negligently or at a speed which is dangerous to the public within the Metropolitan Police area.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The police orders on this subject are voluminous and set out fully the duties of drivers of motor-cars under the Motor-Car Act and the regulations thereunder, and also under the Highways Act and the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, which give additional powers to the police. The police are instructed to use their utmost endeavours to check furious or reckless driving and to secure the enforcement of the law. In particular, they have instructions from the Commissioner to take proceedings under Section 1 of the Motor-Car Act in all suitable cases in which, though the statutory speed limit is not exceeded, cars are driven recklessly or negligently or at a speed dangerous to the public. In the more crowded districts they proceed under this section, when necessary, for such offences as driving on the wrong side of refuges or driving too rapidly over foot crossings.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Do the same instructions apply to the parks?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No; I think they are under the park regulations, but that is a point I will inquire into. I have taken great care in regard to the action of the police under my control in London.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that I have recently on several occasions been informed by the Metropolitan Police that no instructions have been issued to them to pay any particular attention to motor-car traffic?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I was not aware of that fact, and it is contrary to what I have heard and to the instructions I have given.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Are motor-cars quite immune if they have coronets on them?

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): Is it not the case that the ten-mile-an-hour limit applies to the parks?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I think that is so.

Motor Traffic.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the New Forest whether he will consent to withdraw his notice of Motion relating to the increasing number of accidents occasioned by motor-cars, in order that this matter may be fully discussed by this House.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 917.

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU: I understand that the Vote for the Local Government Board is going to be put down for an early day, Thursday week or fortnight, and the day previous to its being taken I shall be glad to withdraw my Motion.

Mr. SOARES: Do I understand that the hon. Gentleman wishes a full discussion as to the administration of the law as well as to the necessity for new legislation?

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU: I am perfectly in accord with the hon. Gentleman in wishing for a full discussion of the matter.

Police Pensions.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, seeing the inconvenience to which police pensioners are sometimes subjected in connection with the signing of their life certificates, and seeing that a section sergeant is authorised to sign a pensioner's paper from the Army or Navy, he will consider the advisability of adding police section sergeants to the list of persons authorised to sign police pensioners' life certificates.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The rules now in force as to the signing of police pensioners' life certificates were framed after consideration of those relating to military and naval pensions, and I see no occasion to alter them. The list of attesting authorities gives a wide range of selection—including police officers of or above the rank of station sergeant—and I understand that it is an extremely rare thing for any inconvenience to be caused.

Heavy Motor Traffic Order.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will withdraw the Order permitting heavy motor-cars weighing up to twelve tons and permitted to travel at a speed not exceeding twelve miles an hour, in view of the danger to road bridges and the damage by vibration to buildings, cellars, pipes, mains, and sewers.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): With regard to the speed to which motor-cars weighing up to twelve tons are restricted I would refer the hon. Member to my reply to his Question of the 8th inst.† No information has at present reached the Local Government Board which would justify the withdrawal of the Order to which he refers.

Metropolitan Pneumatic Despatch Bill.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the promoters of the Metropolitan Pneumatic Despatch Bill are proceeding with the Bill, which was set down for consideration by a Select Committee on the 16th inst.; and, in these circumstances, what course he proposes to take to give effect to his views in regard to the Bill.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The Pneumatic Despatch Bill having been read a second time, it is open to the promoters to proceed with it before a Select Committee. I understand that it will be opposed by the London County Council and the Corporation; and I have informed the promoters that I must reserve my liberty of action on the Third Reading, if the Bill is reported by the Committee. The course to be taken would naturally depend upon the form in which the Bill was reported by the Committee; but if the local authorities above-named oppose the Bill on the Third Reading, I should feel it my duty to support them.

Holidays in the Post Office Engineering Department.

Mr. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General why the holidays of a number of men employed in the engineering department of the Post Office have either been reduced or taken away altogether; is he aware that certain classes whose qualifications for holidays, since 1897, was twelve months service, have now been informed that a four years qualification is necessary; will he state the reason for this change, and whether it is his intention to enforce the four years qualification for the annual leave upon other grades employed in the postal service.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 1115.

Lord STANLEY: The men to whom the hon. Member refers are "gang hands" employed, not on any permanent engagement, but taken on and discharged as occasion may require at the market rate of wages for work in telegraph and telephone construction. Some of these men had been given annual leave after twelve months continuous service, although there was no proper authority for it. I have now, with the concurrence of the Treasury, authorised annual leave on full pay for those who have been continuously employed for four years or more; but I see no reason for continuing an irregular privilege to men with less than four years service. I have no intention at present of altering the existing rules as to leave in other branches of the service.

Post Office—Unestablished Linemen's Grievances.

Mr. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that a number of unestablished linemen who have been employed upon linemen's duties in the engineering department of the Post Office for many years, with a prospect on appointment of going to a maximum of 40s. per week, have now been informed that the maximum has been reduced to 38s. per week; is he aware that this is looked upon as a distinct breach of faith; and can he state how many appointments have been made to the class of senior linemen for the provinces, and what will be the ultimate number of provincial senior linemen.

Lord STANLEY: As already explained in my former Answer to the hon. Member, the maximum pay of the general body of established linemen has been reduced for new entrants concurrently with the introduction of a class of senior linemen on a higher scale. No promise of appointment has been given to the unestablished linemen and there has therefore been no breach of faith. The question of appointing thirty men to the class of senior linemen is now under consideration. This number will ultimately be considerably increased.

Application for a Licence at the International Exhibition, Hammersmith.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for West Salford, as representing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whether the attention of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners has been drawn to the application recently made to the Kensington justices for a provisional licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors in connection with the land owned by the Commissioners at Shepherd's Bush, upon which it is proposed to erect the buildings of the International Exhibition; whether he is aware that the area covered by the lease is eighty-three acres, and that in the application referred to powers were asked for to sell intoxicating liquors in forty-four different places; and whether the Commissioners are now in a position to prevent any further application being made for such a licence.

Sir LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): The Ecclesiastical Commissioners have agreed to let an area of about eighty-four acres of land at Hammersmith for a long term of years for the purposes of an exhibition similar to that at Earl's Court or at the Crystal Palace. As regards the lands used for exhibition purposes, the Commissioners do not think it practicable to prohibit any application by the lessee for licences for the sale thereon of wine, beer, and spirits, in connection with the supply of refreshments. The recent application to the licensing justices to which the Question refers, was made by the intending lessee, and the Commissioners had no knowledge that any application was about to be made or as to the number of places in which it would be asked that liquors might be sold. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with the discretion of the magistrates as regards the granting of licences: but the settled policy of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, as is, I believe, generally known, is to reduce, as far as possible, the number of licensed premises on their estates.

Dalkey Income-Tax Dispute.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the collector of income-tax at Dalkey enforced payment of income-tax amounting to £3 8s. 4d. from Mr. Robert Armstrong, an evicted tenant in county Longford, in respect of a house, his property, in former place; and whether, seeing that the rent of this house is the only means of subsistence this man has, he will consider the advisability of giving instructions that this claim should not be pressed.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): The hon. Member appears to be under some misapprehension as to the facts, which are not correctly represented in the Question. The amount of tax due was £4 7s. 2d. in respect of arrears for two years, and this was collected from two tenants of Mr. Armstrong's, who paid immediately on application being made to them—all efforts having failed to obtain from Mr. Armstrong the amount due. Mr. Armstrong has declined to claim exemption, and, unless he does so, it is impossible to accord him any relief.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: If I induce this man to claim exemption will the right hon. Gentleman see that his claim is considered?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, but I do not know the exact position now. It may be that the time during which the claim should have been made is passed. I will look into it.

River Riffey Floods.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, with a view to the formation of a drainage board for the district flooded by the River Riffey, he will direct the Secretary of the Board of Works at Dublin to forward the necessary documents for the signature of the inhabitants to Mr. Thomas Cuningham, Cam, Edgeworthstown.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): I would refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave him on this subject on February 28th† and April 13th‡. The persons desiring to form a drainage district should apply directly to the Board of Works.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: But the local people have taken all the steps they possibly can to get a drainage board set up. Will the hon. Gentleman assist them?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I will inquire.

Dublin Law Courts' Clerkships.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state when the last open examination took place for clerkships for the Law Courts in Dublin; whether any, and, if so, how many, appointments have since been made to clerkships, and under what circumstances these appointments were made; and whether he can state how many of the present staff were appointed by open competitive examination and how many by other means.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: (1) The last open examination was held July 22nd, 1903. (2) Since that date six vacancies in junior clerkships have been filled, namely, one by open competition in Accountant-General's Office; one in Lord Chancellor's Chief Clerk's Office, and one in Chancery Registrar's Office by transfers of clerks from Land Judge's Office; one in Bankruptcy Court by promotion of Superintendent of Copyists under proviso in Section 73 of Judicature Act of 1877 exempting any person holding any office or clerkship at the passing of that Act from the provision with regard to open competition; and two in the Probate Office by persons appointed by the Judge assigned for the Probate business under Section 5 of Judicature (No. 2) Act of 1897. (3) Of the present staff of the Supreme Court, excluding Heads of Departments and Staff Officers, twenty-eight were appointed by open competition and forty-five by other means. The provision in the Judicature Act of 1877 which threw open all junior clerkships to open competition preserved their patronage to the then existing Judges, and the persons appointed "by other means" represent those who were appointed by patronage both before and since that Act, including appointments by the Judge assigned for Probate business under the Act of 1897.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1490.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 87.

Maconochy Estate, County Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to explain the delay in the issuing of vesting orders to the tenants on the Maconochy Estate, county Longford; and whether he can indicate when the turbary trustees will be empowered to deal with the 1,300 acres of mountain and bog on this property.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): This estate is being dealt with in order of priority. It will in due course be inspected and reported on, and the question of turbary will be fully inquired into.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this agreement was signed sixteen months ago?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am not aware of that, but I am aware there has been a great deal of delay which I am afraid is unavoidable.

Alleged Incitement to Boycotting at Drummullan.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at a meeting held on the 17th March last in Drummullan, under the auspices of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Mr. Rickard, of Cookstown, made a speech advising the people to boycott a Mr. Bell, of Coagh, who was charged at the same meeting as being responsible for extra police having been brought into the town to preserve order; and whether, in view of the fact that official notes were taken of the language used, and the fact that Bell has suffered loss, he will say what action, if any, he intends taking in the matter.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I understand that the facts are substantially as stated in the first part of the Question. Official notes of the speech, however, were not taken at the meeting, and I am advised that in the circumstances a prosecution against the offender could not be sustained.

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of recent expressions of local feeling in Ireland as to inequality in the treatment of the Agricultural Department's officials, he will obtain a Return showing the names of the officials transferred from the Veterinary Department to the Agricultural Department, giving, in each case, the amount of salary immediately prior to transfer, the amount immediately after transfer, and the amount now received; also indicating the date of any increases or decreases.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The information asked for will be embodied in a Return which I will obtain and forward to the hon. Member in a day or two.

Lough Neagh Drainage.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will, before the forthcoming debate on arterial drainage, cause to be circulated amongst the Parliamentary Papers the instructions to, and other correspondence with, Sir William Binnie, who has been commissioned to report on the Lough Neagh drainage question.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The only instructions to Sir Alexander Binnie in this matter are contained in a letter addressed by the Irish Government to him on April 25th. His reply, dated May 1st, completes the correspondence. I have sent copies of these letters to the hon. Member; it is not at present proposed to lay them on the Table.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Seeing that the Treasury gave the instructions to Sir William Binnie will it not pay the expense instead of placing it on Irish funds?

Mr. WALTER LONG: It will be paid out of the Development Grant.

Domiciliary Police Visits at Athenry.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland at what hour the police have entered the houses of the people in the neighbourhood of Athenry; whether they entered houses without the consent of the proprietors; and, if so, by what authority this was done; what was the object of the police in making these domiciliary visits.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am informed that police have entered houses in the neighbourhood of Athenry in the day time and at night no later than 10 p.m., in two or three cases up to 10.30 p.m., when inmates were not in bed, and with their consent. The object of the police in entering such houses was to make general police inquiry with a view to the prevention and detection of crime.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask by what right the police enter the houses in the country, and is it lawful for the police to lay down a rule that the occupants shall not go to bed before 10 p.m.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Answer to the last Question is in the negative. I have already told the hon. Member that the police entered these houses with the consent of the inhabitants.

Mr. DILLON: Has the right hon. Gentleman not stated already on the authority of the police that they never entered houses at an hour when the people ought to be in bed. We are informed that they entered between 10 and 10.30.

Mr. WALTER LONG said that he had already given two or three Answers on this subject. The information he had received was that the police did not enter the houses at a time when the people were expected to be in bed, and further information showed that they entered with the consent of the occupiers. In no case did the police force their entrance into the houses. They had a right to obtain any information they could, provided that they entered without the use of forcible means.

Captain DONELAN: Have the people a right to prevent the police from entering the houses?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am not called upon to explain the general law of the land. As far as I know no force was used by the police in entering the houses.

Mr. DILLON: How much force would be required to enter a cottage in an Irish country district?

Mr. WALTER LONG: By using the word force I did not intend to suggest that it was necessary violently to attack the people, but I meant to convey the fact that the entry of the police was made with the consent of the people occupying the houses.

Mr. BLAKE (Longford, S.) asked whether the consent of the occupants was asked before the police entered, or whether, when they found a door which was not barred, it was opened by the police without any intimation to the occupant or a request made for consent.

Mr. WALTER LONG: That is a legal question.

Mr. BLAKE: No, it is a question of fact.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member ought to give notice of that Question.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) asked whether if a meeting is called at Athenry for the purpose of explaining to the people their legal right to resist the forcible entry of their homes at any hour of the day or night by police without legal warrant, he will undertake that such meeting will not be suppressed by force?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Committee of Defence.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury can he state what is the present composition of the Defence Committee;

of how many members it is composed; and how those members are appointed; is it the practice to admit to its proceedings on the footing of membership persons other than members of the Committee, such as the Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies and the Attorney-General; are such persons allowed to vote as members, and are the confidential documents of the Committee communicated to them; and is this communication irrespective of their having taken, or not, the Privy Councillor's oath of secrecy; is it proposed that the confidential documents of the Committee, in the keeping of the Prime Minister for the time being, shall be retained by him on his leaving office; or is it intended that he shall either hand them over to his successor as Prime Minister or leave them in charge of the secretary of the Committee to be communicated to that successor.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I hope that my hon. friend will allow me to say, without disrespect to the ten Questions put to me, that I really think almost every one was answered, and answered more fully than would be proper in reply to a Question, when I made the two speeches on this subject last Thursday. There are two Questions which I think were not specifically dealt with, and these are whether the confidential documents of the Committee are communicated to the Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies and the Attorney-General, and to gentlemen who have assisted us from time to time when the subjects brought before the Committee were of a character on which their advice could be of great importance and value. When these two gentlemen attend they act as members of the Committee; but of course that does not mean that documents not relating to the subjects under discussion by the Committee are communicated to them or entrusted to their custody. Then the hon. Member seems to think that there is an impropriety in any gentleman being asked to attend the Committee who is not a Privy Councillor. That is not regarded as a bar. I need not say that I made it abundantly clear that the reports of the proceedings of the Committee and the minutes of meetings and the various documents from time to time submitted to it are left for the perusal of our successors should they desire to see at what conclusions we have arrived, and why we have arrived at them.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me for asking yet another Question. Looking at the great importance of this new constitutional body, do I understand that the documents will be left in the charge of the secretary, and can the right hon. Gentleman tell me of how many members the Committee is composed, and how they are appointed?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member was not present when I made my second speech. If he reads it he will see that I dealt at considerable length and in detail with that point. Perhaps he will refer to that speech, and then, if he remains unsatisfied on any point, he can put a Question to me. The House knows that a permanent office, as it were—not a very large one—has been created which is quite irrespective of the incoming or the outgoing of Parliamentary Ministers. It is with the secretary of that permanent body, now responsible for their keeping, that the documents will be left when any Ministry goes out of office.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I understand from reading the right hon. Gentleman's speech that the Prime Minister is the only absolutely necessary member of the Committee. Of how many members is the Committee composed and how was it appointed? The right hon. Gentleman has not answered that.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that I can add to what I have said before.

Sir HENRY FOWLER: May I ask, as to the occasional members of the Committee who do not attend regularly and are not Privy Councillors, whether a distinct pledge is taken from them equivalent to the Privy Councillor's oath that they will maintain an absolute secrecy as to all that takes place in the Committee or in connection with its proceedings?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that any formal ceremony is necessary. It is understood, of course—and this follows from the very nature of the Committee—that the deliberations are of the most confidential character. The Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies, for instance, has in his hands every day the most confidential documents and is absolutely trusted by successive Governments. As for the Attorney-General, I do not know what secret he does not know. Certainly, though he is hardly ever, by the practice of the Constitution, a Privy Councillor, it has never occurred to any one to think that the Attorney-General for the time being, as a member of the Government, cannot be absolutely trusted with any secret.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: What is the style of the Committee? Is "The Committee of Defence" its proper name?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, that is its familiar and affectionate name. I believe "The Council of Imperial Defence" is the true style and title of the Committee.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Amendment again proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out the words 'one thousand nine hundred and ten,' and insert the words 'until Parliament shall otherwise determine.'"—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'one thousand nine hundred and ten' stand part of the clause."

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) rose to a point of order, and reminded the Committee that when last under discussion this Amendment had been ruled out of order on the ground that it made nonsense of the clause. He thought it was extraordinary at the time that the House should have been debating for two hours an Amendment which would have made nonsense of the Bill, but he had since examined the Act and this Bill, and he thought that he could satisfy the Minister in charge of this measure, who did not appear to examine the Amendments at all, that the Amendment was perfectly in order.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member need not continue, I think, because the hon. Member for South Molton has now put down another Amendment which brings this Amendment into order.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) hoped that the Committee would now be able to deal with the Amendment before the House in a more placid spirit than was shown at the close of their proceedings the other day. He had hoped they would have been calmed by the withdrawal of the Amendment, but he gathered that with further consideration the hon. Member would see his way to withdrawing the bone of contention, and thus saving the House the time occupied in debating and dividing upon it.

He had been violently assailed on the ground that a breach of faith had been committed. He hoped it would now be felt that the language was too violent. The view he had taken of the permanent or transitory character of this Act had always been the same, and if hon. Members would look back—he did not advise them, however, to take the trouble—to his various utterances on previous occasions, they would see he had always held that it was a matter of absolute indifference whether the Act remained temporary or was made nominally permanent. It was certain that that nominal permanence would not survive any far-reaching or comprehensive treatment of the rating question, which certainly deserved the attention of Parliament. The difficulties were themselves an indication of the urgent need there was for Parliament to try to bring order into the chaos, and justice into what was perhaps the injustice of our existing system. When that was done, partial legislation like that contained in the present Bill would in the nature of the case vanish and be absorbed in the wider and more logical and comprehensive treatment which they hoped to see some day attempted by this House. On the other hand, if the Act were temporary, and were not supplanted by the wider measure, it was certain that the arguments which had convinced the present Opposition that they ought not to resist its extension would have equal weight with their successors. Whatever Party was in office and whatever Party was in Opposition, the same arguments would lead to the same results; and it would be felt that until the matter could be dealt with as a whole it would be folly not to renew a measure which did, however inadequately, deal with one particular injustice of the rating system. Therefore it was absolutely immaterial from the point of view of general policy what decision the House came to on this Amendment.

But it was said that it was not fair of the Government not to put on Government tellers in order to retain the Bill in its original shape. That was a novel argument entirely and absolutely inconsistent with the views constantly expressed by hon. Gentlemen opposite. How many times had they not made passionate appeals to the Government to leave the House to go its own way undiverted from the paths of rectitude by the artificial methods of guidance which the system of Party organisation provided? Those who had made such appeals had no right to say when the practice was adopted that an outrage had been inflicted on the principles of Parliamentary management or on their particular interests. As to the way in which he himself should vote, though it was not a matter of the smallest practical importance as to what decision was ultimately arrived at by the House, he proposed to vote for the Bill as it was introduced. He desired in no sense to exercise pressure of any sort. He hoped this explanation would tend to remove the alarm and bitterness that found expression last Wednesday.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said that in charging the Government with a breach of faith he had meant nothing personally offensive. He referred only to an official breach of faith with reference to a Parliamentary understanding across the floor of the House, which, if not adhered to, led to complaints which disturbed the peace and procedure of the House. Some of the remarks just made by the right hon. Gentleman were certainly open to controversy, both as to their accuracy and as to their bearing on the present situation. This was not the case of an Amendment to a Bill which was before the House for the first time, and in regard to which the House might reasonably exercise its independent opinion without Government pressure. They had to remember that the Bill, although introduced as a permanent measure, was made a temporary one very early in its career. Whatever justice this Act did to the agricultural community it left undone an act of justice to the urban community. The policy of a temporary Bill was to put pressure on the Government of the day, whether it be Liberal or whether it be Conservative, to deal with that other part of the question which it left untouched. The Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was the representative in the House, had years ago pledged itself to refer the matter to a Royal Commission, and it did so. That Royal Commission took a large amount of evidence and in due course reported to the House, and he believed the Report it presented was one of the ablest Reports ever drawn up upon the question. There were no doubt differences of opinion among the Commissioners, but all sections of the Commission recognised that the urban community had strong claims for relief and recommended legislation. So far as regarded reducing that recommendation into a practical shape, he thought that the Report drawn up by two distinguished servants of the Treasury, Sir George Murray and Sir Edward Hamilton, represented a practicable solution of that difficult question. He laid no blame on the Government because they did not in 1901 introduce legislation founded upon the Report of the Committee. They were in the midst of a great war. When the Renewal Bill was introduced it was introduced as a permanent measure, but it was converted into a temporary measure by an agreement across the floor of the House, and when the Bill went into Committee the Amendment giving effect to that agreement was put and at once carried.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The arrangement was made by means of Question and Answer.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said the point never came before the Committee as a controversial question. But he was bound at that point to interject a parenthetical observation that, in his opinion, the Government ought during the last four years to have dealt with this question. It would have been a better thing for them and for the country at large if they had devoted some time to the solution of this grave and important problem. But for some reason they had not done so, and in due course the time had arrived for this Act to be renewed. The Government thereupon put into the mouth of the King a statement that a measure would be brought before Parliament to renew the Act as a temporary Act. He took it that that was a pledge on the part of the Government that its temporary character would be retained. Then the catastrophe occurred the other day, when an hon. Member on his side of the House, not speaking in any representative capacity for those who sat on that side, but speaking for himself as a consistent supporter of the Bill from the very first, and as one who supported it at a time when it was most fiercely contested, wished to make it a permanent measure. What they had to complain of was, that the Minister in charge of the Bill, instead of saying that the Government introduced it as a temporary measure, and would support it as such, and could not, therefore, accept the Amendment, gave a very broad hint to hon. Members on his own side of the House to vote for it.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No. Can the right hon. Gentleman quote any passage of my speech which can be thus interpreted?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said it might be his imperfect interpretation, but he certainly did interpret the right hon. Gentleman's words as an invitation to Members on his own side of the House to support the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had told them that the difference between them was a purely academic one. The question was, should they make the Bill temporary or permanent? He differed from the right hon. Gentleman. He did not think the question was purely academic. The Bill, at the present time, did not rest on a permanent basis, and it did not require assent in another place for its termination. But he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill would have to be renewed until the Government insisted that there should be a general settlement of the whole question. He felt that the injustice to the urban ratepayer was heavier than to the agricultural, for in some places the urban rates were two or three times the amount of the agricultural rates. Now, however, as he understood the right hon. Gentleman had agreed to give his great personal example in voting against the Amendment, he trusted that, under the circumstances, the hon. Member for South Molton would agree to withdraw it.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said that if the Prime Minister was going to vote against his Amendment he was afraid it was not going into the division lobby. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman did not think his own Bill was good enough to be made permanent or till Parliament should otherwise determine. He had placed him in a predicament by forsaking his own Bill. [Cries of "No, no!"] Well, he had forsaken the principle upon which it was introduced in 1896. Of course, if he were going to vote against the Amendment and if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton were going to vote against it, he was afraid it would be no use his running his head against a brick wall of the big battalions. He regretted very much that both Front Benches were taking the view that his Amendment was one which ought not to be embodied in the Bill; he believed it ought to be. Still, if the

Prime Minister were going to vote against him, he could only say that rather than be beaten in the division lobby he should ask leave to withdraw his Amendment, because after all that had been said and done he should not like to see the House divide and the Amendment beaten. The other day it was ruled that it was a nonsensical Amendment and out of order, and he was glad to know that the Chairman had seen fit to put it from the Chair, because, instead of it being nonsense, he believed if it were inserted it would be about the best bit of sense in the Bill. He could, however, only repeat himself and say that, after the statement of the Prime Minister, he must ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said that if the hon. Member thought they were all going to agree to the withdrawal of his Amendment he could tell him he was very much mistaken. There was no earthly reason in any single argument he had yet heard why it should be withdrawn. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton said the other day there had been a breach of faith on the part of the Government, but did he remember what occurred in the discussions in the past? Did he remember the furious opposition which the Bill encountered in days gone by—he might say the savage ferocity which was directed against both the Bill and its authors, directed against the Bill not in its permanent form but in its temporary form. It was agreed to be made temporary on the Second Reading of the Bill, not for the reason alleged by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy the other day, not because pressure was put on the Government of that time by the borough Members. It was nothing of the kind, and he would tell them exactly what did occur. A number of Lancashire borough Members came to him in the Lobby, and said,—"Now, look here! We will support you through thick and thin in whatever you do in regard to this Bill. If you make it permanent we will support you, but at the same time we shall be glad if you think it right to let it be temporary. But please understand this: so far from wishing to put the slightest pressure upon you, we will support you, whatever course you take." Now, that was what the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy called pressure being put on him by the borough Members. His reply to those Lancashire gentlemen was that he did not think it mattered very much whether the Bill was temporary or permanent, for he had already announced on the First Reading that a Commission would be appointed to inquire into the whole question, that it would report, he presumed, within a reasonable time, and that in all probability, if other things did not stand in the way, legislation would soon afterwards be introduced. The only reason why that had not been done long ago was, so far as he knew, to be found in the tremendous amount of time which had been devoted by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House to opposing and obstructing the measures which the Government had thought it necessary to proceed with first. As he had pointed out, the whole of the opposition which they had to contend with in those days was directed against the Bill not in its permanent form but as a temporary measure. How on earth were they to know that the Opposition—the leaders and the rank and file—were going to take the course they had done on this occasion, after their great recantation. [Cries of "No."] Yes, it was an absolute recantation of their previous opposition, and they had every right to suppose that they would abstain from that opposition, whatever form the Bill might take in the future; and to tell them now that the mere decision of the Government to leave the voting on an Amendment to make the Bill permanent—a Radical Amendment, by-the-bye—was a sufficient ground for their change of attitude, was to tell them something which, with all due respect, would not wash for a single moment.

He did not want this Amendment to be withdrawn, and he said that in the interests of the boroughs. They had had ten years experience of a temporary measure, and it had led to nothing being done in the interests of the boroughs. Why was that? It was said by Gentlemen opposite that it was too much to expect any Government to interfere with a temporary measure before its time had expired. He held that the Government was entitled to interfere with any measure of that kind if it thought fit, but he was bound to say at the same time that there was some force in the contention. On the other hand, if they made the Bill permanent—permanent, that was to say, until the whole question could be dealt with—then they would have forthwith such an agitation on the part of the boroughs for a change in the law which would give them fair and equal justice, that he would defy any Government, he did not care from which Party it was drawn, very long to resist it. That was the ground on which, in the interests of the borough Members, quite as much as in the interests of Parliamentary convenience, he believed it would be right and proper to support this Amendment. He believed, also, it would be in the interests of the country at large, of the agricultural community as well as of the boroughs, and, above all, in the interests of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the measure should be carried in the form suggested by the hon. Member for South Molton. He had some conversation with that hon. Member the other day, and he was certainly surprised at the course he had now decided to adopt. It was asserted that he (the Member for Sleaford) had "nobbled" the Prime Minister.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): No; the President of the Local Government Board.

*Mr. CHAPLIN said the hon. Member offered to withdraw that expression if he could tell him he knew nothing beforehand about the intentions of the Government. Now, he would tell him exactly what happened that afternoon. Just before the Amendment came on he left his place and asked the President of the Local Government Board what he was going to do in regard to it. The reply was that he thought he would leave it an open question, and he was asked if he approved of that. He said at once, of course he did, and that he was very glad to hear it, for, as far as he was concerned, he should certainly support the Amendment, whether it was left open or not. Later on he saw the hon. Member for South Molton, and told him he would support his Amendment with all the forces at his command. Now at the last moment, to his intense surprise, and to his very great disgust, the hon. Member, who he had thought really did mean business, and who he had hoped was indulging in something more than mere Party electioneering, proposed to withdraw his Amendment. All he could say was that so far as he had any weight he should object to the withdrawal, and should do his very utmost to get the Amendment carried.

Mr. DALZIEL thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the tribute he had paid to the authenticity of the remarks he made the other day. They now found themselves in a very peculiar and interesting position in regard to the Bill. The Prime Minister, in regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Molton, was going to take a different course to that adopted by the President of the Local Government Board. The Government had brought in a Bill which they had declared to be of a temporary character; now they left the whole principle of the Bill practically to the "vote as you please" decision of the House. That was not a course which any Government should take in regard to its own Bill. The Prime Minister had reminded them that he had often been appealed to to leave the voting open. That was not the point. His contention was that it was the duty of the Government to make up their minds definitely on this question and not, by withdrawing the Whips, to leave the matter open to their supporters. He thought he saw the reason why the Government had taken up their present attitude. Sooner or later—later rather than sooner—he expected there would be a general election, and the right hon. Gentleman was anxious, while still defending the honour and dignity of the Government, to allow the agricultural Members to vote for making the Act permanent and the borough Members to vote for making it temporary, so that when they were called upon to face their constituents they would be able to point with virtuous pride to their votes. That was, he believed, the sole reason for the Government allowing their supporters to "go as you please."

He did not think this should be made a permanent measure; it was originally passed as a temporary one, and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would deny that had he not conceded the demand that it should be made temporary its passing would have been endangered. So great was the opposition to it among his supporters that he doubted if it could ever have been passed as a permanent measure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford had urged that they should make the Act permanent, because then the urban constituencies would rise in revolt and something would have to be done—it was to be the last straw which would bring about an agitation which would compel the Government to deal with the demands of the urban districts. Well, he could not accept that view; he held, on the contrary, that if the measure were temporary it would obviously be the duty of the next Government to deal with the urban question, so that the whole problem might be solved. He had never altered his opinion that this Bill was unjust and unfair; that it was a bribe to a particular class of the community, and he was opposed to making it permanent, both on that ground and because such a step would make it more difficult to obtain consideration for the claims of the urban districts.

Mr. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes) did not agree that if this Amendment were carried the result would be that all prospect of a comprehensive scheme of rating reform would vanish. It must not be forgotten that personal property escaped paying rates in consequence of the annual renewal of the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill; and, seeing that the annual renewal of that Act had not compelled the Government to deal with the whole question of rating reform, he submitted that the argument of the hon. Member opposite would not hold water for a single moment. They were now voting as to whether this temporary expedient which did justice to agriculturists should continue until a comprehensive measure of rating reform was brought forward. He was strongly in favour of this. He believed many Members representing agricultural constituencies on the other side of the House were also strongly in favour of it, and he hoped they would vote against the proposition for the withdrawal of the Amendment.

Lord EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) supposed that after the speech they had just had from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford it would be too much for them to hope that the matter would be terminated by the unopposed withdrawal of the Amendment. He thought there was every reason why an emphatic protest should be made from that side of the House against the attitude of the Prime Minister on the question. He protested against the right hon. Gentleman treating the question of the temporary or permanent character of the measure as one of no practical importance. He did not wish to take up the time of the Committee with points of order, for, of course, he accepted the ruling of the Chair that the new Amendment placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for South Molton had put the first Amendment in order. But it seemed to many of them a very open question whether the enormous change proposed by the Amendment was really within the title of the Bill. He was not saying it would be in the power of the Chairman to rule that it was outside the title of the Bill, but he did suggest that a change of the kind proposed was as near being so as legitimately it could possibly be. It was a Bill to extend an Act which was a temporary Act, and yet the object of the Amendment was to make the Billl permanent. That appeared to him to be very like a violation of the ancient and established practice of Parliament. In any case he protested against the doctrine laid down by the Prime Minister that it did not signify, and that it was the same thing greatly to extend or diminish a proposal before the House. Sir Erskine May pointed out that there was an essential distinction when in his book on Parliamentary practice he said that the modification of a notice of Motion was permitted if the amended notice did not exceed the scope of the original Motion, and, if a Motion were proposed which differed materially from the terms of the notice, on an occasion of that kind it could only be made with the consent of the House. This was, it was true, an

Amendment to a Bill, but he thought the Committee ought to be guided by the spirit of those observations. If this subject were to be considered from the point of view of the general question of local taxation, he must ask the Government whether it was their intention or not to bring forward in the present session of Parliament the measure relating to valuation promised in the King's Speech.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that with all due respect to the noble Lord he was bound to say his two points of order had nothing whatever in them. He had told them that in his opinion the title of the Bill would not allow of such an Amendment. But it was a Bill to extend the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE: I said it ran as near the line as possible.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES denied that it went as near as it possibly could; it was a long way off. It was a Bill to extend the Agricultural Rates Act. They might extend it *ad infinitum.* They might extend it until Parliament otherwise determined—which was what the Amendment proposed—or they might extend it until all eternity. Then with regard to the other point raised by the noble Lord, he would point out that Amendments in Committee and notices of Motion were not on the same footing. It was quite right that there should be no extension in the case of a notice of Motion laying down an important principle which the House came prepared to discuss and hear discussed, but it was quite different with Amendments in Committee. Of these no notice was required, and indeed they often became necessary in consequence of what had happened in the course of the debate. He did think the Opposition were ungrateful in complaining because the Government were allowing their followers to vote as they pleased—a vote that was according to the dictates of reason and logic—in respect of an Amendment moved from the opposite benches; and their suggestion that the Government on previous occasions had rejected their appeals to allow their followers freedom of action made their present complaint doubly ungrateful. What sort of encouragement was it to a poor Government to be told that they were always doing wrong, and if they were to find that when they did right it was not to be accepted as being right?

The Prime Minister had said—and said truly—that this was an academic question. Whether this Act was made permanent or whether it remained, as introduced, a temporary one, the question would still have to come up for settlement when the whole rating question came to be dealt with—for the Act, whether permanent or temporary, would disappear in the general scheme of settlement. He was disposed to agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford that it was better for the Act to be made permanent. If they made the Act permanent there would be such an agitation from the boroughs as could not be resisted, and he pictured to himself the awful prospect of Birmingham marching on London, and Manchester revolting, and both being led through Lincolnshire by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford. The President of the Local Government Board told the Committee on the last occasion that he would not vote either for or against this Amendment. In his (Mr. Bowles) anxiety to be led by his leaders he had very grave doubt on that occasion as to which way he should vote, or whether he should vote at all. To-day that doubt had been dissolved. The Prime Minister had said his opinion was that the Bill should be maintained by logical minded persons in the shape in which it now existed, and consequently the Amendment of the Member for South Molton should be rejected. That determined his action, and he should vote with the Prime Minister with a satisfaction only tempered by the regret he felt in not following the President of the Local Government Board.

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said he rose for the purpose of expressing his surprise that if this matter was of no practical importance the Prime Minister should have taken the course he had. Why the Amendment had not been resisted by the Government from the first he could not understand. The Bill would have been through Committee last Wednesday but for this Amendment having arisen. If the Bill were altered there would need to be a Report stage, and some of them who were borough Members and who felt keenly the injustice of making this a permanent Act would feel compelled to attempt to alter and improve the Bill in that stage. They did not wish to waste time over the Amendment at all, and he for one acknowledged that the agricultural interest required consideration, but on the other hand it was a matter of importance to the towns that the question should automatically come up for discussion from time to time. The right hon. Member for Sleaford had said that the boroughs would be so roused by feelings of injustice that they would make the life of the Government intolerable if they did not deal with the question of local taxation. He was glad to have from the right hon. Gentleman an acknowledgment of the injustice which the boroughs were suffering at the present time. For himself he hated the wrangles that went on between town and country. If the Bill were made temporary and renewed from time to time the matter would come up at successive periods, causing the question to be raised whether the time had not then arrived to deal with the question of rating on a wider basis. He hoped, therefore, that the Amendment would be rejected.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said as a borough Member the only thing that induced him to make up his mind one way or the other was the effect which this matter had on the subject of local taxation. The subject was one which they should have tackled before this. There was a great grievance in the boroughs and other parts of the country. He was not alarmed about the marching up of the towns on this subject. He did not think that would be very effective, but he thought they should have now and again a debate such as this to raise the question of local taxation. If the Agricultural Rates Act were a permanent measure the question might possibly be relegated to some time in the distant future, and he would rather run the risk of having a debate on the subject occasionally, because he thought it would hasten a great national change in the system of taxation about which he was very keen.

Dr. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye) said he thought the speech just made reflected almost identically the opinion on the Opposition side of the House. The right hon. Member for Sleaford twitted the Opposition with a change of opinion within the last eight years. He was perfectly certain that the right hon. Gentleman would realise the fact that fighting for a principle was one thing, but when that principle had been defeated and the change had been in operation for several years, it was quite a different thing to upset the arrangements that had been made. Had he been in the House when this Bill was fought originally he should have fought it as strongly as his friends did. But after nine years of its operation, when new contracts and arrangements had been entered into, it was a different matter. It was unthinkable that in the present state of affairs they could by one stroke of the pen stop this Bill at the moment. They might have their heads in the clouds, but they must remember that they had their feet on the ground, and as men of common sense they had to deal with affairs as they were at present. They did not want this Bill to be permanent, and there was a good deal of common sense in the remark of the Member for Islington as to the periodical bringing up of this question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford argued to-day for the relief of the farmer. The small farmer paid perhaps £100 in rent and £15 in rates. If the right hon. Gentleman was so anxious to relieve the farmer, surely the £100 was a much bigger question. But the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that the landlords, like the other monopolists, wanted to throw the burden on the ratepayers. If the right hon. Gentleman wanted to relieve the farmer he could surely find an opportunity.

Mr. CHAPLIN: What opportunity have I ?

DR. HUTCHINSON: Make your opportunity. You know the House better than I do.

MR. CHAPLIN: I do not know how I can reduce my rents more than 70 or 80 per cent., as I have already done.

DR. HUTCHINSON: That is an example to other landlords.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: This is outside the present question.

DR. HUTCHINSON said he regretted if he had gone outside the narrow limits of the debate. He hoped the Bill would not be made permanent.

LIEUT.-COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs) said inasmuch as he supported most loyally the Government in 1896 in passing this Bill, and inasmuch as he had defended it in his own constituency and in certain parts of Wales, he would state why he could not see his way to support the Amendment. Although he represented boroughs, he loyally supported the Government in passing the measure because he saw a great opportunity of doing some good for his agricultural friends, but he thought a great mistake—he would not go so far as to say a breach of faith—would be committed by the House of Commons if they made the Act permanent. There could be no doubt that the towns required relief in local rates, and the occupier of agricultural land had been greatly aided in the last few years. In his own county of Montgomeryshire, one of the smallest in the Kingdom, agricultural land had been relieved of some £12,000 to £15,000 in rates per annum since 1896, and he hoped his Radical agricultural friends in the constituency would not forget that at the next election. He therefore appealed to hon. Members who represented county constituencies not to go back upon the pledge given in 1896 that the Act should not be permanent.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he did not think his hon. and gallant friend need trouble about his constituency, because he understood it was one of the constituencies which was to be redistributed out of existence. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford would see that the general feeling of the House was in favour of making the Bill a temporary one. After all, the Government was anxious to avoid troubles on difficult questions, and even the next Government would desire to avoid the settlement of the local taxation problem unless forced upon it. He was certain the next Government could not renew a measure of this kind without at the same time extending relief to the towns as well. He did not join with those who condemned the Prime Minister in leaving this an open question. He was only sorry that what the right hon. Gentleman had done now had not been done before. Many a time in Committee propositions which did not commend themselves to the judgment of the House as a whole, were carried simply because the Government did not see their way to treat them as open questions. Upstairs the Government were constantly defeated, but no one ever dreamt of treating the questions there as questions of confidence, with the result that the Bills came out in a much better form than they went in. It was a great misfortune that Governments did not more generally follow the practice which the Prime Minister had adopted on this occasion. He did not think the present case was one in which the practice should have been initiated, but he was glad that the Prime Minister had had the courage to leave anything an open question. If a similar course had been adopted in regard to many matters in such measures as the Licensing Bill and the Education Bill those measures would have issued from the House of Commons not in the shape they finally assumed, but would probably have effected a settlement of difficult problems which now had been left open or even exacerbated. He hoped that in future the Government would leave more of these matters to the judgment of the House.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said there was a disposition to suppose that every member of the Opposition who opposed the Bill eight years ago was now converted to the principle of this measure. He was an example to the contrary.

He regarded the Bill on its first introduction as immoral, and he regarded it so still. The fact that one set of people were poor and required assistance did not make it right to pick the pockets of another set of people. The Bill rested on expediency then, and it rested on expediency now. The Prime Minister no doubt thought it expedient that the present Government should remain in office, but that did not make their remaining in office any the more moral. The Bill rested on no solid foundation, and he should be glad to see it made temporary in order that it might come up for reconsideration at the first opportunity.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) suggested that borough Members on the other side might assist the House in coming to an immediate decision. This matter was of serious importance to London, inasmuch as London, while receiving only £2,000 under the Bill, contributed at least £500,000 or £600,000. He had no desire to continue the discussion if it was understood that borough Members opposite were going to take the reasonable view indicated by the hon. Member for North Islington. Agriculturists were getting all that they could ask in the temporary renewal of the Bill, and they should at any rate leave to the representatives of boroughs, on whom the burden of rates was pressing with far greater severity, the hope that when the matter came up again something would be done for the towns as well as for the rural districts.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 266 : Noes, 80. (Division List No. 161.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex.F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Alhusen, Augustus HenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Austen, Sir John
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour,Rt.HnGeraldW.(Leeds
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Sir Francis T.(Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Benn, John Williams
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles,T.Gibson (King'sLynn)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G,
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Bull, William James
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell,Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cogan, Denis J.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crombie, John William
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duncan, J. Hastings
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellice,CaptEC(SAndrw's Bghs)
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans,Sir FrancisH.(Maidstone
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farrell, James Patrick
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Findlay,Alexander (Lanark,NE
Finlay,Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flower, Sir Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,SirE.W (B'rySEdm'nds
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir (MerthyrTydvil)
Harrington, Timothy
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon.Sir Arthur D.
Heath, SirJames(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higham, John Sharp
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,J.F (Sheffield, Brightside
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hoult, Joseph
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.

Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnson, John
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nsea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kilbride, Denis
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S,)
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Mooney, John J.
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murphy, John
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parrott, William
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Duncan V.
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rea, Russell
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuffnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. Spencer.

NOES.

Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F (N. Lancs.)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Fellowes, Rt Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Lawrence (Kent, Ashford
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H. (Somers't, E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambert, George
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J Scott (Hants.)
Moore, William
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.

Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Welby, Sir Charles G.E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Mildmay.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said a great deal of misapprehension had existed in the minds of hon. Members opposite as to the attitude of many members of the Opposition in respect to the renewal of the Agricultural Rates Act, to the enactment of which they offered, in 1896, the most strenuous opposition. While not only ready but anxious to renew that Act at the present time, he did not abate by one jot or tittle the position he then took up. The arguments advanced in opposition to the Bill in 1896 had even more force to-day, when it is more clearly seen how unequally and unjustly it operates. The case for renewal was absolutely plain to everyone familiar with agricultural districts. In the case of freeholders it would be unjust to withdraw the relief, an equal injustice would be inflicted on leaseholders the terms of whose leases had not expired, and in the case of many farms where rents had not been altered and where there had been no previous abatements of rents owing to estates having been managed for many years on a uniform system of moderate rents. But that did not in the least diminish the objections entertained by himself and his friends to the principle of the Act. While it might be to the convenience of present or future Ministers to have four years in which to think over the question of local taxation, he personally would have been glad to see the Bill renewed year by year until a final settlement was arrived at. Whatever Ministry was in power within the next year or two, local taxation would have to be dealt with in a broad and comprehensive spirit. Supposing there was a change of Ministry he did not believe that tenant farmers would suffer in the least in respect of any relief to agricultural rates. The speeches of the late Sir William Harcourt on this question in 1896 had been greatly misrepresented and misunderstood by agriculturists. What he denounced was that while the tenant farmers were the men who had really suffered from the depression the Bill relieved tenant farmers only incidentally and indirectly, its real effect being to pass a vast sum of public money more or less rapidly into the pockets of the landowners. Those speeches were, in his opinion, the greatest speeches on the real issues of land tenure reform ever delivered in Parliament. Sir William Harcourt affirmed the proposition that the question of rates was of vast importance to the tenant farmers but that the Bill relieved the wrong men, and in the wrong way. Looked at as an income-tax on actual profits, a rate even of 2s. 2d. to 2s. 6d. in the £. was extremely serious. According to the farm accounts brought before the Agricultural Commission, the average rate of profit during the depression was so low that the amount of the rates was in some cases far greater than the profit which the tenant farmers had been able to draw from their farms for years past. The continuance of the relief of rates was therefore a question of vital importance to them.

But no answer had been or could be given to the charges brought against the principle of the Bill. It rejected the tremendous case which the town manufacturers and tradesmen had for relief, men who were employing a large amount of labour, incurring great risks and making profits often as small or smaller than the farmers. It was grossly unjust to impound the first great surplus of the present Ministry for the benefit of a particular class. Under the present land tenure tenant farmers were obliged during the depression not only to pay rents which represented far more than was economically possible for the land to produce, but they were compelled owing to the weakness of their position to pay the whole of the rates out of their own pocket and were unable to transfer any of the local burdens to the landlords whose land they held and on whom those burdens were supposed on bargaining to rest. That had been proved up to the hilt. The only inference to draw from this was that this measure was and always would be a Landlords' Relief Bill. He challenged anyone on the opposite side of the House to attempt to traverse this contention that as the law stood and if economic forces were left to take their course the relief afforded by this Bill would go to the landlords. This was unavoidable and the whole of this money had gone and would go into the pockets of the landowners. Where there were abatements at the time this took place, at once. He had been assured that this was the case in regard to two large estates in the Midlands. And a large landowner had told him that this would of course be done on his own estate. They were not to be blamed. The process was inevitable, and would operate at each revision of the rent. In the case of other land, when the value came up for review and the land was sold, this relief would go straight into the pockets of the landlords when the whole of these economic considerations and laws came into effect in governing the bargains between landlord and tenant and the sale of agricultural land to new purchasers took place. The dole provided for in this Bill added so much percentage to the annual and the capital value of the estates of the landlords. Those were the objections which the Liberal Party had maintained and would maintain to this measure. They were willing to renew it now because they recognised that agricultural land earned a very low rate of profit and the withdrawal would work injustice but they did so in the hope, that a Ministry would soon be in power which would deal boldly and conclusively with this question of local taxation; and, as regarded agricultural land, would see that the right men received the relief, and that it was distributed in the right way, and whether by a division of the rates between the owner and occupier, or by some direct form of tax upon the owner, so as really to relieve the pressure and burden of rating upon those who really needed the relief.

He should like to have seen the renewal of this Act limited to a shorter period than four years. This was a question which ought to be dealt with speedily, and although they might acquiesce in this Bill they would remember that the Prime Minister had told them that nothing in this Bill limited the absolute right of Parliament to deal with this question and no constitutional obstacle stood in the way of any Ministry dealing with local taxation before four years expired. They should in the near future revise and amend this Act in such a way as would make the relief go to those who had born the burdens of agricultural depression in past years, and who were entitled to receive relief in the future. He hoped that duty would be undertaken before long and carried out in a spirit which would make the agriculturists realise that they had as sincere friends on the Opposition side as amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had alluded to the Report of the Commission upon Local Taxation. He had served six years on that Commission, and what he wished to point out was that the hon. Member for Northamptonshire seemed to forget that the Commission agreed that the Agicultural Rates Act was in itself just and fair and might take either a permanent or temporary form; and that it would hold its place when they had a general reform of the system of rating. Although when this matter was first debated suggestions were made as to the relief being given to the landlords, yet if the hon. Member for Northamptonshire adopted what the Royal Commission thought was right from an impartial point of view, he would be obliged to say that after an impartial inquiry the Agricultural Rates Act had been agreed to by the Commission as an Act right and just in itself. If they were going to support the recommendations of the Royal Commission, which he entirely endorsed, they must certainly allow that this Act, whether permanent or not, was an Act which must always take its place in any reform of local taxation.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said the joint Secretaries of the Treasury, in a separate Report, stated that the agricultural rates grants would be dispensed with under this scheme, and their Report was not at all favourable to the particular proposals which they were now discussing. It was clear, therefore, that they did not accept this as a satisfactory solution.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As a final solution.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said this question ought to be considered comprehensively, and, admitting the rates on arable land to be unfair, yet these grants should not be continued to occupiers of land without more consideration being given to others under a reform of the incidence of local taxation.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to have forgotten the Report which he himself drafted. The impression he gave to the Committee was that the Report of the Commission was in favour of this Bill as a permanent measure.

MR. CRIPPS said the Commission was in favour of this Bill as it stood, having regard to the existing conditions.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that hon. Members on his side of the House claimed that the whole thing should be readjusted and reconsidered. The Commission never gave any absolute opinion as to the justice of this as a permanent settlement of agricultural rating. He did not think its supporters claimed that it was more than a temporary expedient to get over what they considered the distress of agriculture at the time. He did not think anyone put it higher than that. The case of his friends and himself was that it was unfair as between the agricultural and the town population, and unfair as between one agricultural class and another. One point which was forgotten was that since the Report of the Commission was given the grievance had been aggravated as between different classes by the passing of the Education Act. In Surrey the rate had gone up nearly 1s. There were districts in that county that never paid a penny for education before which were now rated 11½d. Farmers were only assessed now upon half the rateable value of their farms. Who had to make up the difference? The local tradesman, the artisan, and the manufacturer. After all, it was nearly as important from the point of view of the community that local industries should be kept up. In some cases they had almost been crushed out by the rates. There were cases in the West of England where the rates made all the difference between continuing industries and closing them up. Not only did they get no relief, but they had to pay an increased burden of taxation because of the reduced liability on the agricultural land.

This Act was very unfair as between one class of agriculturists and another. The branch of agriculture which had suffered most seriously during the last few years had been that of arable land. There the labour was much more expensive, and the returns were not as profitable as from grass land. Hundreds of thousands of acres had gone out of cultivation in the East of England. He was told that there were thousands of acres of arable land in the East of England where no rent was paid now, and farmers were complaining that they could not make the tithe rates. What happened in those districts under the working of the Act? He would take Essex and Cambridge—cases of arable land districts. In Cambridge most of the land was arable—370,000 acres being arable land, and 120,000 acres grass land. In respect of the arable land the total relief was 8d. per acre. Contrast that with Somerset, where they got 6s. per acre on arable land. He was not surprised that the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Somerset supported the Act. Was that really fair? In Cambridge there was a struggling agricultural community which could hardly make both ends meet. The tithe was pretty high, and they got only 8d. an acre. He did not mean to say that there had been no agricultural depression in Somersetshire, but it was nothing as compared with the depression in the eastern counties. In Essex there were 510,000 acres of arable land, and there the relief was 1s. 5d. per acre. Contrast that with the rich land of Chester, where rents were exceedingly high, running up to £2 and £3 an acre. The land was such in Essex that they could hardly pay tithe of 1s. 3d., whereas in Chester they got 3s. 5d. He did not think that was fair, and to say that this had been regarded by any responsible person who had entered into the question as a fair settlement of the question of rating in agricultural districts was to say a thing that could not possibly commend itself to any portion of the House.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford had taunted the Opposition by saying that they had not opposed the Bill with the same savage ferocity which was shown seven or eight years ago. The Prime Minister had taunted them with having seven or eight years ago spent all night in opposing the Bill, while now they were content to spend only a couple of days. He wished to point out that only three or four Amendments on the Bill would be at all relevant and within the limits of order, and, therefore, they could not spend more time on it with the tenacity which was shown years ago. Once a Bill was an accomplished fact they could not contest it in the same way as when originally proposed. When it was only a question of renewing a contentious Bill they could not fight in the same way. Hon. Members opposite fought the Ballot Act with what might be called savage ferocity at the time it was brought forward, but now it was renewed every year without a word being said. Why? Because the principle had been established, and it was very difficult from their point of view to go back to the old procedure. The same thing applied to the Irish Land Act. The Party opposite fought that strongly, denouncing it as spoliation, robbery, and outrage, but they had gone on to legislate on the same principle, and to increase the reductions in rent by Bills which they had themselves introduced.

A great deal had been heard lately as to the desirability of introducing some change for the purpose of restoring the prosperity of our agricultural industries, especially in connection with arable land, because it produced more labour. This was an Act of Parliament which did not give a fair share to arable land. If the Government wanted to give a grant of £1,500,000 at all, why not distribute it on the industries that were languishing? When considering a question of this sort, the Government ought to pay some heed to the various classes of agriculture in this country. If Shropshire was anything like Essex it would get 1s. 6d. per acre, while Cheshire, a contiguous and very prosperous county, would get 3s. 6d. An hon. Gentleman opposite made an enthusiastic speech in support of the Bill, and he was quite right from the point of view of his constituents. He thought the hon. Member had voted for making the Bill permanent, but did he mean to say that this made a fair settlement of the problem? Since there was a grant of £1,500,000—he frankly acknowledged that it could not be recalled—would it not be fairer to distribute it in such a way as to encourage the rather languishing agricultural districts, instead of those which were prosperous? He was perfectly certain that agriculture was not worse than certain industries followed by local tradesmen. He could speak from experience in regard to industries in his own district, and he knew that they had been hit very hard by local taxation, and yet there was no relief given to them at all. There was in the old days a cloth industry in the West of England, which was purely a myth now. It was once a prosperous industry, but it had been crushed out partly by high rates. Evidence was given before the Commission by manufacturers in the West of England to the effect that one of the questions they had to deal with was that of heavy local rating. They had to pay not merely the ordinary poor rate and the education rate but also the general district rates. Hon. Members opposite might say that the ratepayers got lighting and other conveniences, but, after all, these were only the essentials of civilisation in the district. It was not as if they were getting a contribution from the locality, and it could not be said that they were getting anything like a return. It was true that they were all getting a return from the rates, although it was not always very obvious.

He very much regretted that the Government had not faced this matter. He was afraid it was too late to make an appeal to them now. They had had the Report of the Royal Commission before them—the Report of men representing all shades of opinion—and even those who believed in the Agricultural Rating Act acknowledged that it was only a very small part of a very difficult problem. They acknowledged, too, the grievances of local rates in other districts. He protested against the renewal of this Bill for the third time without their making a real effort to tackle the whole question. He was not going into the question of mandate, but, at any rate, the Government had a mandate to deal with this question. But, instead of that, they roamed into all sorts of questions which nobody expected them to deal with, and they left on one side problems of this sort which were awaiting settlement, and which everybody expected they were going to tackle.

This was one of the greatest problems of the hour. He knew that there were constant sneers at the local authorities because they were running up debts and rates, but he asked hon. Gentlemen who had sat on municipal coprorations or county councils whether, with the best will in the world, they had ever been able to keep down the rates? The rates went up and up in spite of everything. He had sat for years on a county council and had been returned, with others, as an economist. But what happened? At the end of three years it all ended in the rates being increased by 2d. or 3d. in the £. That was the case with the London School Board, when hon. Gentlemen opposite said that that body was buying pianos and providing dancing-classes, and that all those sort of things should be cut down. But what was the result? Twopence or threepence were added to the rates. It was the irresistible tendency of things. The essentials of civilisation were driving them to greater expenditure. Take education; the legislation of the present Government had added a great deal to the education rate. He was not at all sorry that the Education Bill had compelled people who had never previously contributed one penny towards education to pay their share. Everything seemed to conspire to increase the burdens on the community. He knew little towns where the people considered whether they should not, on account of the heavy rates, abandon everything to the mortgagees. East Ham was only the spokesman of many districts. There was a real danger of the people being taxed out of all their income. He was not going to suggest a remedy; but he held that people who had got the means and who at the present moment escaped responsibility from local taxation should be compelled to contribute acording to their means. These were matters which he would like to see the Government dealing with. The Government talked of being in power for another two years, but instead of going for the redistribution of the constituencies, let them redistribute the burdens.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Gentleman was travelling very wide of the question before the Committee. Clause 1 dealt with the question of the continuance of the Agricultural Rating Act; and the hon. Gentleman must not introduce another subject.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that the whole problem was whether the House was to continue this Act, and what he argued was that they should deal with the whole problem of local taxation. One of the reasons for the line of argument which he took was that the Government had the Report of the Royal Commission before them, and the reason why, in the first instance, the Act was made temporary was because that Royal Commission, sitting at that time, were agreed that the grievance was not purely agricultural.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said he would point out that the hon. Gentleman was using an argument against the principle of the Act.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that the whole principle of the Bill was contained in the first clause, and if that was to be contested at all then there was a right to give reasons for contesting it. This was the proper place to discuss whether the Act should be continued. Really, the Government, instead of legislating in this form, ought to deal with the whole problem. It was a serious problem and year by year the Government had done nothing to settle it, and if his friend went into the division lobby he should vote with him.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said he could assure the hon. Gentleman that those who were interested in the continuance of the Agricultural Rating Act were anxious that something should be done in the interests of the trading classes; and when the time came for the accomplishment of that work he would find them ready to support that reform. They felt that the Agricultural Rating Act was a measure of simple justice, dictated by the greatly reduced paying power of the agricultural classes, and they did not think for a moment that it would interfere with the readjustment of the whole basis of local taxation. The hon. Member seemed to think that they were indifferent to the claims of the towns, but he would point out that the real relief of local rating must lie in placing on the Imperial Exchequer more of the expense for the maintenance of the roads, police, and sanitary arrangements than had hitherto been the case. Education should also be paid for by the Imperial Exchequer; and that principle was acknowledged to a certain extent in the Education Act of 1902. The hon. Gentleman considered that the advantages of the Agricultural Rating Act did not come to all classes of the agricultural community with equal advantage. That must necessarily be the case in a Bill which applied to a mixed community, but the divergence was not so great as his hon. friend seemed to think. The hon. Member apparently believed that the advantage applied almost exclusively to arable land; but that was an error into which those who did not understand agriculture were apt to fall when they spoke to practical men.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was against the whole principle of the relief of the agricultural interest; but what he had said was, that if relief was to be given it should fall to the distressed districts.

MR. SPEAR said he was bound to admit that mixed farms had been less unprofitable than grazing farms.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about milk?

MR. SPEAR said that there was a vast area of grazing land which was not available to produce milk, or, if it were produced, the farmers could not sell it. Mixed farming had been less unprofitable than grazing land, and, therefore, there was not much in what his hon. friend had said as to the difference of benefit falling on different kinds of land. There was the Poor Rate Exemption Act, which was renewed every year, and he only claimed that the Agricultural Rating Continuance Bill was an extension to the farmer of a measure of similar justice as was given by that Act to tradesmen. He rather wondered that the hon. Gentlemen opposite spoke so strongly when this little act of justice was done to agriculture and was silent every year when the Poor Rate Exemption Bill was before the House. He (Mr. Spear), however, rose to say that those who supported the Agricultural Rates Act recognised that the trader had a grievance, and to urge the Government to deal at the earliest possible moment with the whole question of the alteration of the basis of local taxation. When the present basis was formed there was nothing practically but real property on which to levy rates for local expenses, but since then personal property had grown at least three times in value to real property, and yet the owner of personal property, in respect of that property, contributed nothing to the cost of the roads, police, and sanitary matters, although enjoying the advantages from the outlay quite as much as though he were the occupier of real property. The evil effect of that was that it tended to drive away capital from the development of British industries and caused it to be used in developing other countries When a scheme was brought forward to deal justly with the claims of the trading classes in the towns hon. Members would find those who supported this Bill equally anxious to do justice to the trading classes.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he believed the hon. Member for Carnarvon was wrong in stating that farmers in Somerset received 6s. an acre relief in rates on arable land. He ventured, however, to submit that it was an entirely fallacious argument to put this question forward. The question they were considering under this Bill was not relief on one kind of land or another. As he took it, the essence of the Act, and the only ground upon which he supported the original Act of 1896, was that it was an attempt to relieve the unfair burden of taxation from falling entirely on one kind of property which could least afford to bear it. The question should be looked at from one point of view only, namely, that it was unfair that one form of property should bear the whole burden of local taxation while other forms of property entirely escaped, and upon that ground he would certainly not be a party to opposing the continuation of the Bill for another four years.

MR. BENN (Devonport) said the Committee ought not to vote for the continuance of this Bill without some more definite assurance from the Government that it would deal with the whole question. The hon. Member for Tavistock said when the time came he and his friends would be very glad to assist the boroughs. When would that time come? There was a very specific recommendation by the Royal Commission, namely, that in making the recommendation for the continuance of the arrangement embodied in the Act of 1896 they must not be regarded as in any way minimising their important proposals for altering the incidence of taxation which all classes of ratepayers felt, and that it was a matter of urgent necessity that practical effect should be given to those proposals. That recommendation provided some comfort at the time to the ratepayers of London, whose case had become critical. One very important item on the rating paper was occasioned by the Agricultural Rates Act. London contributed one-fifth of the extra taxation, or £467,000 per annum, in order to keep this Act in operation. London got back as its share of relief a paltry sum of £3,000, which meant that the ratepayers of London had to pay 3d. in the £ in order that this Act might be continued. It was a monstrous thing that London, overburdened as it was in many other respects, was called upon for a further period to contribute to this fund. He was quite in favour of giving assistance to distressed agriculturists, but the distressed borough ratepayer should have at least some word of comfort from the Government. It was a most serious matter for London. The increasing rates of London were driving industries away, and if the ratepayers could be relieved of even this 3d. in the £ it would be useful work. Other boroughs would also be glad of the benefit. He might give the figures relating to Devonport, which were equally striking, and he hoped that before proceeding to a division the President of the Local Government Board would be able to say something for the comfort of London and the other boroughs.

MR. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire) said he should like to join in the protest against the complacency with which the Government had introduced this Bill, and continued an injustice which was done to the boroughs. The Government had a very lively feeling towards the landlords in the country but a complete indifference to the injustice which was being done to trade, labour, and manufactures in the towns. It might be necessary to readjust the form in which the rates fell upon a community, but the rates were local charges and there was no reason why one locality should be called upon to pay another's rate. He could see no reason why the State should give to one locality more than it gave to another. There might be a necessity for a readjustment within a locality of such matters as lunacy and education which might be regarded as being of national concern; but if these services were to be readjusted they should be readjusted all round both for town and country. It appeared to be nothing but gross favouritism that one particular class should be picked out for a dole. The manner in which it was done, too, was most unsatisfactory. It did not do justice as between one farmer and another, or as between one parish and another, or as between one county and another.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) was understood to say that the essence of the Report on Local Taxation was to do away with the old scriptural maxim, " To him that hath much shall be given, and to him that hath little, even that little which he hath shall be taken away." The Government had been many years in office, had had the Report of perhaps the most able Commission that had ever been appointed before them for years, and had never made the smallest attempt to give effect to its recommendations. It was very painful for hon. Members of this House to constantly hear of doles being given to this class and to that. If the suggestion that had been made by the hon. Member for Tavistock had been adopted there would have been a great simplification of this matter. The agricultural people would have been satisfied and the hon. Member for Devonport would have had no reason to complain if it were recognised that certain charges ought to be national charges. In that way only could this question be got rid of and cease to be a recurring one. The crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland certainly derived great benefit from this Act, but even there there was much discontent among the cottars and villagers at the incidence of the rates. The hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs spoke of a 10s. rate in some parts of Wales, but the rates in some parts of the constituency that he represented largely exceeded that sum, and if it were not for this Act many of his constituents would find it absolutely impossible to carry on owing to the heavy charges levied in respect of education, poor rates, and charges for lunatics, the latter charge being a most onerous one, and which should be borne by the nation. He trusted that the whole question of rating would be seriously taken up in the near future, whichever Party might be in power, and dealt with, not only with regard to the continuation of this Act, but with regard to the whole question of rating as between town and country.

*MR. A. K. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon) said as an agricultural Member he desired to emphasise the fact that agriculturists would join all other classes of ratepayers most cordially in urging that the rating of the country be put upon a satisfactory basis. It was a great mistake to suppose that agriculturists were completely satisfied with the working of, or the benefit conferred upon them by, this Bill. There was no grievance existing so far as the urban ratepayers were concerned which was not still shared by the two sets of ratepayers who received relief under this Bill. The agricultural ratepayer had still all the grievances that the urban ratepayer had, and the grievance which he had been relieved from was one which he had in excess of those he shared with them. It must be remembered that the agricultural ratepayer was rated not only on his house and buildings but upon what might be described as an implement of his trade; he was rated on his land, which was no part of his housing, but simply part of his stock-in-trade. That was a tax in addition to those he bore in common with the urban ratepayer, and that was the grievance which was pointed out by the Royal Commission upon Agricultural Depression, on whose Report the Agricultural Rates Act was based. Then as to the clerical tithe-owner, he, too, shared to the full the grievance of the urban ratepayer in respect of his house and buildings. The injustice in respect of which he had benefited under the Tithe-rating Bill was that of being assessed not only on his house and buildings but on his salary, and that without any deduction for the expenses to which he was put in earning that salary. A great deal of confusion had arisen and immense injustice to the parsons from the blunder pointed out by the present Lord Lindley, then Master of the Rolls, of treating the parsons' income from tithe as realty instead of as profits, under which head alone they were rateable under the Statute of Elizabeth. The case of Reg. v. Christopherson, decided in 1885, exposed that blunder and showed that it was as an "inhabitant" and not as an "occupier" that the parson was ratable for tithe, and if that had been borne in mind it would have been clear also that the parson was entitled to have a deduction of the necessary outlay in earning the profits so rated. When in 1840 all other personalty was exempted from rating the parsons' income from tithe was left rateable, and without any of the deductions to which as profits it was entitled. He was grateful to hon. Gentlemen opposite for having come round to the view that, however bad it might be, this Bill was not a job to give a dole to a particular class but an effort to deal with a very difficult subject. If it had been a bribe, as represented on platforms outside the House, no lapse of time could justify hon. Members in voting for its continuance. The fact was they recognised that, though far from a perfect Bill, it was really an honest attempt to deal with two real grievances acknowledged by strong Royal Commissions. Agriculturists were not less anxious for a reform in rating than the urban ratepayers, because they thought this was a defective method of dealing with the evil from which they suffered, and that it left them at the present time just as badly hit so far as their dwellings and buildings were concerned as other ratepayers. Therefore, there was no coolness on the part of the agricultural ratepayers in pressing the Government to go on with rating reform. The Committee must remember, however, that though this had been delayed for ten years that period had been one of enormous activity, both foreign and colonial. He was anxious to see such a Bill passed through, but he did not remember any time when the Government could have brought it in. A Valuation Bill was acknowledged to be a condition precedent to a Rating Bill, and last year when a Valuation Bill was brought in what happened? Although it was a symmetrical Bill framed on the considered advice of the experts of the Local Government Board, based on the Report of the Royal Commission, when it was brought in there was found to be such tremendous opposition from all parts of the country that the Bill was dropped. He hoped, however, to see that Bill revived in a form which would be acceptable to the Boards of Guardians and the public generally.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down illustrated what had been characterstic of several of the speeches they had heard, namely, that although the hon. Gentleman was in favour of this Bill he did not regard it as entirely satisfactory. He himself was one of those who were impatient with regard to this Bill. He thought it was unsatisfactory because it was unjust, and if it was unjust it ought not to be considered for a moment either as a temporary Bill or otherwise. If they thought it was fair on the whole, it was, as a temporary measure, on the whole satisfactory; but if it was not just, then it could not be considered to be satisfactory under any circumstances. He held the same view as he had always held, namely that it was unfair as between the districts; that it was unfair to those who found the money and that it was unfair to those who received it. He would not speak of the liability of personalty to rating in the same way as realty, although of course under old statutes it was ratable. But almost insuperable difficulties arose in regard to the rating of personalty, and in consequence it was not persisted in, nor could any appeal be made on behalf of the land because these burdens were attached to the land. The proposals of this Bill were in the first place unjust as between the different localities. Let them take the case of London. London contributed between £460,000 and £470,000 a year towards this money, and she received £3,000 out of it. How could that be said to be fair. It could not be justified at all in any way, and the very mention of those figures would show what an enormously important proposal the proposal of this Bill was, because £500,000 or nearly £500,000 from London was an enormous contribution. That was about the amount that had been spent annually on London improvements during the last twenty years, and this money was being diverted from that and other useful purposes for the benefit of other parts, though no fairy was prepared to come forward and give

London £500,000 for the purpose of effecting such improvements as had been made during the last twenty years. The case of London was typical of that of other towns, and, therefore, he need say nothing more as to the injustice as between urban and agricultural districts. But when the money was given it was unjustly distributed, and he quite agreed with what had been said that it had been distributed rather in the sense of giving to those who had and taking from those who had not. For instance, the tradesman in a country village would suffer by his rates being made higher, whereas the farmer beside him, who was in a much more prosperous position, had his lowered.

Mr. SPEAR said the tradesmen's rates would not be higher except in the case where the expenditure of the local board had increased since the passing of the Act.

Sir ROBERT REID agreed, but said the tradesman derived no benefit from this Bill, and a scale had been established by which he paid on a larger scale. The Act not only distributed the money unjustly but imposed a higher scale of payment on the tradesman, and therefore the hon. Gentleman would admit that he was correct in his observation when he said that as regarded those who found the money the Act was unfair. It was unfair in another sense also. He did not know how many years ago it was since the principle of Imperial grants in relief of rates was discussed in the House, but some years ago it was pointed out in the House by Mr. Hunter, who was then a Member, that Imperial grants were grants taken from the poorer classes of taxpayers in the majority of cases, and, as they were bestowed in relief of rates, they were bestowed in relief of a burden which was laid on those who were better off. Mr. Hunter then conclusively proved that when money was taken out of Imperial funds and bestowed in relief of rates, that money was taken out of the pockets of those who were less wealthy to put it into the pockets of those who were more wealthy, and in that sense this Bill was unjust. He had always opposed this Act and should continue to oppose it.

Why had not the subject of local taxation been taken up before? The Report of the Royal Commission was four or five years old, and there had been plenty of time between then and now to have dealt with this subject. When it was dealt with there would be no difficulty raised so far as the Liberal side of the House was concerned, because they were in favour of some proper reform of local taxation. He did not doubt that on many points they would come into line with the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman and of the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was a member, but at the same time all would agree that this was not a question which anyone could hope to take up with a view to obtaining the unanimous assent of the House. They had obtained some very valuable information from the Royal Commission, and it was, in his opinion, a very great pity that the Government had not brought in this very necessary Bill. So far as the Bill now before the House was concerned, he maintained that it was an unfair Bill, and that being so he should vote against it.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR thought that in the present instance the hon. and learned Member would admit that he was speaking for himself alone and not for his colleagues. The Bill was described as being unjust and should, therefore, be thrown out. But that was not the view which had been taken by the Leader of the Opposition. He did not think that under these circumstances it was necessary for him to go at length into the fundamental arguments for or against the Bill, but he would say a few words in reply to the latter part of the hon. and learned Member's speech. As he had before pointed out, only four or five years had elapsed since the Royal Commission on Local Taxation reported, and in that period the circumstances had not been favourable for taking up so difficult a question. There must be a surplus at the Treasury sufficient to increase largely the contribution from Imperial to local funds, and such a surplus had not occurred. He thought that was admitted upon all sides. [Cries of "No, no!"] Again, before the rating question was dealt with, valuation must be placed on a more uniform basis. Last year the Government brought in a Valuation Bill which met with a great deal of opposition, and, though there was another Bill in an advanced stage of preparation, its passing must depend on many doubtful circumstances. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were not so willing to pass even an unopposed Government measure as to give any great hope that such a controversial subject as that of valuation could be easily dealt with. There was a general consensus of opinion in favour of renewing these Rating Acts, and yet a whole day had been spent on the Second Reading. A whole afternoon last week was devoted to the Committee stage, and it seemed extremely likely that they were going to spend another afternoon before it was passed through Committee.

SIR ROBERT REID: Surely the right hon. Gentleman makes no suggestion of obstruction?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that when measures on which there was agreement were to be discussed at such length the difficulty of introducing a Valuation Bill, with all its contentious questions, was obvious. Whichever Party introduced a Rating Bill it would be found to be one of enormous difficulty, and he doubted whether any attempt to reform the rating system would have any chance of success in the first year of its being made. But the question was becoming more and more urgent, and he hoped that within the four years for which the Act was being renewed an opportunity would be found either by the present Government or their successors for dealing with the question.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not said something a little more satisfactory in regard to the Valuation Bill. He had not given them much comfort in that respect, but instead of that they had received from the right hon. Gentleman a lecture, addressed to those on their side of the House, upon the assumption that they did not understand the extreme difficulties and complications of the question of local government and local taxation. Really he thought they might have been spared those observations. Surely it was common knowledge that they all recognised that this was a question of extreme difficulty. The Government had informed them that the question of valuation lay at the root of this subject, and he should like to know why the Government were not proceeding with the Bill which they had undertaken to introduce. A Bill of this kind ought not to be mentioned in the King's Speech unless there was some intention of proceeding with it. It had been stated in the lobby that this Bill was going to be brought in elsewhere. Even if the Government were not hopeful of passing the measure surely they could introduce it in another place, and in that way have the question discussed. He protested against the history of the transactions in this House given by the right hon. Gentleman in regard to this Bill. He understood that he did not actually accuse the Opposition of obstruction, but he used an expression which suggested that there had been a considerable amount of time wasted in the discussion of this measure. What happened the other day was entirely owing to the unusual course of action taken by the Government in regard to an Amendment moved from the Opposition side of the House, when all of a sudden the right hon. Gentleman announced his intention of accepting that Amendment.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that statement had been made three or four times and he had repeatedly contradicted it. The Amendment alluded to was never accepted by the Government.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE said the Government announced that they were going to leave an important principle in the Bill an open question, and the result of that sudden change on the part of the Government led his right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton to move the adjournment of the debate because the Opposition were so entirely unprepared for such an entire change of front on the part of the Government. Then there came questions of order which led to further episodes, and he thought they had a right to protest against the charge that the

Opposition had caused any delay. In regard to the charge of obstruction he did not think that the Government had any cause for complaint at all in that respect.

Mr. DALZIEL said most Members on the Opposition side of the House, and many on the other side, would associate themselves with the protest which the noble Lord had just made to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill. Anyone who had listened to the debate would indignantly repudiate the suggestion that there had been a single speech made which was not a useful speech. This was avowedly one of the most important Bills which the Government had brought forward. On the present occasion they were practically adopting the principle of a measure which, when it was first brought forward, created much discussion. The debate had been in no sense obstructive. A great proportion of the time of the debate was occupied owing to the attitude of the Government towards an Amendment moved at an earlier stage. He would point out that one useful result of the debate had been that the right hon. Gentleman himself had been converted, because the other day he said that if a division was taken on the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Molton he would clear out of the House. When the division took place he supported the Opposition Members, so impressed had he been by the arguments against the Amendment.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said that since he made the statement referred to the hon. Member for South Molton adopted the course which he suggested, and offered to withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. DALZIEL said he would leave the House to judge whether that was a serious explanation on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. He maintained that it had not the remotest bearing on the fact that the right hon. Gentleman, having stated that he would take no part in the division, afterwards voted against the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman did so because he recognised that the force of opinion was stronger than he had supposed. They now saw that the promise to deal with the urban question was one made for Party purposes in order to get the Bill through. They ought to be grateful to the hon. Member who initiated this debate because, if it had been productive of no other result, it had called forth the speech of the President of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that the Government, although they had been ten years in office, had not been able to find a single hour in which to deal with the grievances of urban ratepayers. The right hon. the Gentleman told them that he was not going to deal with it. He said it would take two years to do so, and that meant, of course, that the present Parliament was not going to deal with it. But the Government had found time to give and to continue doles to their agricultural friends in the House and out of it. Hon. Members on his side would not be afraid to take that issue when the time came in the constituencies. The Government had shown an utter failure to appreciate the importance attached to this question throughout the country. They had passed this Act for the benefit of the agricultural class, but they had done nothing whatever to pass a Bill which would benefit the other portions of the community. If there had been any serious intention to pass the Valuation Bill which was introduced last session they could have got it through. If it had been sent to a Grand Committee upstairs, instead of the Aliens Bill on which time was wasted, it would, he assured the right hon. Gentleman, have been passed without any difficulty. It was owing to the mismanagement of public business by the Government that the Bill was not passed. The Committee had heard the further declaration that, although the measure dealing with valuation was mentioned in the King's Speech, the Government were still engaged in drafting it. Did that indicate any real intention on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to pass the Bill this session? Three months after the beginning of the session they were still considering the drafting.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It is practically ready.

MR. DALZIEL: If it is practically ready will the right hon. Gentleman tell us when it will be introduced.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: You cannot discuss the details of the Valuation Bill on this clause.

MR. DALZIEL said he had not mentioned a single detail of the Bill. He was asking information about its introduction because that had an important bearing on the value of this clause. The Government were simply playing with the question of rating and had no serious intention of dealing with it. That was a fact which they would take note of at the proper time in the constituencies.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said it was all very well to say that the Government had not brought in a Valuation Bill and a Rating Bill. Hon. Members knew that the one must precede the other. He should like to know when the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, or any other Member, thought the Government ought to have brought in these Bills. They had special Bills to bring forward, and they had carried them. When they brought in an Education Bill, and a Licensing Bill, they were told that they had no business to do so.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Question before the House.

SIR MARK STEWART said the Bill they were now discussing was a practical measure brought in with the object of relieving a very distressed community. He entirely differed from the observations that fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries as to the occupiers of land having no right to relief from Imperial taxes. Many occupiers of land were amongst the poorest and hardest working members of the community. Those who spent their time amongst agriculturists knew how poor they were, and the difficulty they had to make ends meet. The House and the Government were to be congratulated on having passed the Agricultural Rates Act.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the Opposition Members had been taunted by hon. Gentlemen opposite on account of the line they had taken with regard to this Bill. It was because the President of the Local Government Board suddenly accepted an Amendment moved on the Opposition side of the House proposing to make the Act permanent that there had been so much discussion. That Amendment raised a storm which lasted during the whole of the first day the Bill was in Committee. It irritated Members representing town constituencies into making speeches in opposition to the Bill. He thought those who represented agricultural constituencies had a right to say something as to the position they had taken for or against the Bill. Some of his friends had gone against this Bill absolutely, but he must admit that their arguments were not altogether fair. When this Bill was brought in it was on two pleas. The first was the unfair and unequal incidence of the rates. There was no question that in hundreds of instances there was an unfair incidence in the case of agricultural lands. But, as soon as that was proved up to the hilt, the supporters of the Bill said that agriculture was distressed and that relief should be given to it. That was quite true, but the way the Bill operated was to relieve the rich ratepayers and to oppress the poor. It was the land which could afford to pay the highest rent that got the most relief under this Bill, and he could not help saying that that was not the right way to relieve agriculture. In certain cases, small market gardeners were relieved; but not in the great bulk of cases. Whole tracts of land had gone out of cultivation in Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and Essex which were almost entirely arable and the lowest rented, and where it was most difficult to collect the money. There the agricultural population had been driven out of employment, and the land had only been relieved to the extent of 6d. or 8d. per acre, while other rich land in other districts had been relieved to the extent of 6s. or more. The hon. Member for Tavistock had said that the mixed farmers had done best. He quite agreed; but he would point out that the arable land was the most important to the community because it employed more labour than the pasture lands where only a few shepherds were engaged. He quite agreed that this Bill relieved agriculture to some extent, but it did it in the wrong way. However, though he believed the clause under discussion might have been much better drafted, he would support it, because it was much better than if nothing at all had been done for agriculture.

He hoped that there would be an assured promise from the Government that the whole question of rating would shortly be taken into consideration and dealt with in a comprehensive manner. The House ought to get some information as to the possible date on which such a measure would come on. Those who represented agricultural constituencies in different parts of England realised that agriculture was not well treated as regarded rates, and that this Bill did not relieve agriculture in the way it ought to do; and that a proper readjustment of rates in towns as well as in the rural districts would do more for agriculture than this Bill would do. Hon. Members who represented town constituencies might rest assured that all those who represented agricultural constituencies would be at one with them in pressing on the President of the Local Government Board to give a pledge that he was going to take the whole question of local taxation in hand very shortly. The hon. Member for Tavistock had spoken of the Poor Rate Exemption Act which was annually renewed.

Mr. SPEAR said he had always voted for the renewal of that Act, but he thought that there was a much larger inequality under that Act than under the Agricultural Rating Act.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said he quite agreed that the hon. Member did not think he ought to oppose the renewal of that Act; but he would point out that it was one thing to oppose an Act which was renewed periodically, and which had been only ten years in existence altogether, and another thing to oppose an Act which had been accepted, as a principle of law, since 1837.

What the hon. Member for Tavistock wanted, seemingly, was to ask for a general readjustment of the rating system by a side issue on the principles of an Act which had been practically obsolete since 1837, and which had been done away with because it was found that it would not work. Could it be imagined that anybody would be so insane as to go on such lines as that in order to get an agricultural grievance altered? He did not want to tread on everybody's coat tail; but the hon. Member for Berkshire, who was not satisfied with the discussion on the Agricultural Rating Act, pointed out that tithe was not real property, and that the Poor Rate Exemption Act of fifty years ago did away with rating on personal property. He believed that tithe was not personal property, but there were others who considered that tithe was neither "fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring," although it had always been treated in the way of rating as real property. He did not want to go into a subject which was raised so freely on the other side of the House; but he thought that the best way out of the difficulty was to get an assurance from the Government that they would deal with the whole question at an early date, and therefore he recommended his hon. friend to accept this clause. The Government had tried to readjust matters, but they had only succeeded in introducing confusion worse confounded, and trouble would be stirred up as between town and country. Every question which this Government had brought forward had caused strife. He would not oppose this clause so long as this was a temporary measure; but if hon. Members representing agricultural constituencies kept up the agitation for a readjustment of local rates they would get something done in that direction.

Mr. HARWOOD (Bolton) said he did not think the House had been fairly dealt with, on the whole, in regard to this Bill. There was agreement that the agricultural business was suffering from a grievance in regard to rating, and they were told that this Bill was to remedy that injustice. But they were also assured that as soon as possible the whole question of local taxation was to be put on a scientific footing. The Royal Commission went into the whole matter and made a Report with a view to settling the question; but now they were informed that there was no hope of that being done, and that the idea had been abandoned. That was hardly fair to those who had acknowledged that the urban ratepayers had something to complain of. Now it was neither proposed to deal with the whole question nor to give the urban ratepayer any compensation. That was not fair to the urban ratepayer. Either they must deal with the whole question and put both sets of ratepayers on a fair footing, or else give the urban ratepayer some relief as well as the agricultural ratepayer.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 244; Noes, 86. (Division List No. 162.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, Robert
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn. A.J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Boland, John
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn J. A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hn. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S.W
Fuller, J. M. F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Greene, Sir E W. (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt Hn. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Hay, Hn. Claude George
Heath, Sir. Jas. (Staffords N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hn. Jas. Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir J. H.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N.R.
Lee, Arthur H (Hants, Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)

Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murphy, John
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paulton, James Mellor
Peel, Hn. W. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanark.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thornton, Percy M
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sheffield
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wills, A. Walters (N. Dorset)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Younger, William

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harrington, Timothy
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Labouchere, Henry
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
Parrott, William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Dalziel and Mr. Harwood.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

GOVERNMENT SHIPS BILL

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that in order that every ship flying the British flag might be furnished with proper papers, and that proper regulations might be made for the government and discipline of the men on board, it was necessary that the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act should apply to it if it were a merchant ship, or the provisions of the Naval Discipline Act if it were a ship of His Majesty's Navy. A ship to which the Merchant Shipping Act applied must be the property of a British subject. But for the purposes of that Act His Majesty the King was not a British subject; and the law officers of the Crown had, therefore, come to the conclusion that certain ships which were the property of the Crown could not be registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, and, on the other hand, could not be brought under the Naval Discipline Act unless manned by the Royal Navy. The consequence was that certain ships, such as the hospital ship "Maine" and the distilling ship "Aquarius," which were Government ships but did not form part of the Navy, as well as ships in the service of other Government Departments, being manned by civilians, were able to enter only British ports abroad and not foreign ports. The object of the Bill was to remove this disability. Ships owned by Government Departments were the property of the Crown, and the Bill proposed to give to the Crown the privileges which were conferred on British shipowners by the Merchant Shipping Act, and thus enable the Admiralty and the other Government Departments to apply to any ships that were in their charge and were the property of the Crown such regulations as were necessary to enable those ships to obtain the necessary *status* in foreign ports, and to maintain proper discipline on board. He hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading, and then, if there were any points of detail which hon. Members wished to raise they could be dealt with in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said the Bill appeared to raise serious constitutional questions upon which the House would doubtless be glad to hear the Attorney-General. He did not rise to oppose the Bill; but he thought it was a very serious thing to give to the Admiralty power to make regulations in respect to these ships, in other words, to legislate without coming to Parliament at all. He hated legislation by reference, but this kind of legislation appeared to be even more objectionable.

Mr. PRETYMAN said he should have explained that it was proposed by the Bill that these regulations were to be made by Order in Council. He was prepared at the Committee stage of the Bill to provide that before these regulations had effect they should be laid on the Table of the House, so that the House might have the opportunity of expressing its opinion upon them.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that after midnight was not a good time for considering such questions. The Bill appeared to give the Admiralty power to pick and choose from the existing statutes.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that was because there were terms in the Acts in reference to the Board of Trade and so on, which would not be applicable.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the proposed method of procedure was open to so much objection that he asked the hon. Gentleman to consider whether it was worth while to persevere with the Bill in its present shape. The House ought certainly to have a list of all the ships that would be affected by the Bill. The matter had come on somewhat unexpectedly, and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman would agree to withdraw the Bill for the moment.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said the Secretary to the Admiralty had led the House to suppose that the Bill would apply only to a particular class of ships which were almost part of the Navy, and he mentioned that there was a difficulty about certain ships having proper papers, and that when they visited foreign ports the fact that they were not under the Naval Discipline Act led to inconvenience; but, if anybody looked through the Bill and examined it, they would find that it applied to all ships belonging to Government Departments, which embraced an enormous number of ships manned by civilians and which were not part of the Navy at all. They would have men who were civilians in every sense of the word brought under the Naval Discipline Act, and he hoped the House would not accept this without further explanation. Possibly it would be beneficial that the Admiralty should have power in some cases to apply the Naval Discipline Act, but the Bill applied to all ships employed by Government Departments, including ships employed by the Board of Trade, harbour tugs and so on. If the Bill was to stand as it was he should have to oppose it, because it would cast upon many of his constituents, who were purely civilians, the onerous conditions of the Naval Dicipline Act.

Mr. PRETYMAN said this had been carefully thought out, and no man would be engaged except under the Merchant Shipping Act and if it were proposed to place him under the Naval Discipline Act in case of war he would have the option of re-engagement. The whole object of the Bill was to avoid the necessity of employing costly naval ratings in Government ships which were now manned by civilians.

Mr. KEARLEY said that was not the purport of the Bill at all; there was no mention about war.

Mr. PRETYMAN: It would be put into the regulations, which would be laid before the House.

Mr. KEARLEY pointed out that other Departments than the Admiralty had been taken into consideration, and it was the intention of the Bill that ships owned by any Government Department should, at the option of the Admiralty, be put under the Naval Discipline Act. The "Maine" and the "Aquarius" were doubtless manned mainly by blue-jackets and naval artificers. His case was that, unless these powers were curtailed, very important civilians would come under the Naval Discipline Act. If the Secretary to the Admiralty would assure him that that would not happen, he should not be so much disposed to oppose this Bill. At the present time many of the men employed in his constituency readily stated their grievances, but under this Act they would scarcely be allowed to open their mouths.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said they had been told that the groundwork of this Bill was the discovery that had been made that His Majesty the King was not a British subject. He should have imagined himself that anything open to be done by British subjects was most certainly open to His Majesty the King to do. The hon. Gentleman said that a British vessel must necessarily be owned by British subjects, but there were plenty of British ships flying the British flag which were owned by foreigners. This Bill gave the Government power in regard to any ships under the control of any Government Department, not merely to put them under the Naval Discipline Act—and that would be hard enough although it was a considered system of naval discipline, and so was the Merchant Shipping Act—but it proposed to allow the Government to take whatever it liked out of the Naval Discipline Act and the Merchant Shipping Act, and leave what it liked, and to do this without the authority of the House, except the general authority given by this Bill. Under the Naval Discipline Act the men could be deprived of all civil rights, and, therefore, a measure of this kind should be watched with the greatest possible jealousy. To allow a Department to pick and choose in this way was a proposal which he wondered could be seriously made. They must know what the rules were to be in detail, and they should make certain that no wrong would be done to the men. This measure placed the whole thing in the hands of the Executive Government, and he strongly objected to it. What he objected to most was the power given by this measure of making new rules. This Bill was contrary to all constitutional principles. If the Government wanted to impose regulations let them bring them down to the House, and put them into a schedule. He did not think they ought to give the Government such enormously unlimited power as was proposed in this Bill.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) thought the objections which had been raised to this Bill were not at all unreasonable, and this was not the first time that his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn had stood up for constitutional principles in opposition to the revolutionary proposals of the present Government. It was a cruel thing that instead of proposing the conditions and rules they were now proposing under this Bill that the Government should be able to declare what conditions should apply to these men. The Bill said that the Government were to be limited in making these regulations, and Clause 1 said—

> "For the purpose of prescribing the papers to be carried by these ships, and regulating the employment of persons on board these ships, and the discipline of persons so employed."

Therefore, it was clear that the Department was to make rules in regard to the terms of employment and discipline, and the hon. Member for King's Lynn was in error in supposing that they must be taken either from the Naval Discipline Act or the Merchant Shipping Act, for they could take any set of rules they liked.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he quite understood that, for they would be able to take out what they liked, and they might take other rules.

SIR ROBERT REID said that that was a very remarkable power to be given to any Department. If those two Acts did not suit them they might bring in something which was not in the one Act or the other. It was quite true, as the hon. Gentleman had said, that the provisions had to be laid before Parliament, but as a matter of fact the value of that requirement was not very great. In regard to what subjects was this great power to be given? In the Naval Discipline Act, and the Army Act, Parliament year after year enacted the regulations which applied to sailors and soldiers, and now it was proposed that for the vessels to which this Bill applied any regulations might be made law by Order in Council. Surely that could not be right. It was no good saying that the opponents of the measure were conjuring up an evil, and that they knew that these powers would not be abused. If there was any constitutional precedent for what was now proposed it ought to be stated. The fact was that the Government proposed to regulate the terms of employment and the discipline of persons on board a particular class of ships, and they ought to tell the House what they proposed. What were to be the terms of employment and what was to be the discipline? Then they would know whether they should assent to the Bill or not. They ought not to assent to the making of laws in this matter by Order in Council. He hoped that hon. Members on both sides of the House would indicate to the Government that this was not a good constitutional principle.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said he had listened with great interest to what his hon. and learned friend had stated as to the principles of the Constitution. He wished to state why this Bill should now be carried to a Second Reading, and any matters of detail left to the Committee stage. The Merchant Shipping Act, of course, contained a code of regulations for vessels which did not belong to His Majesty, but there was no provision to meet the difficulty that had arisen. If the vessels were not to be under the Merchant Shipping Act, the only alternative was that they should be under the Naval Discipline Act in its entirety. It might be said, why not set out in the Bill those portions of the Merchant Shipping Act and the Naval Discipline Act it was desired to apply? But the Merchant Shipping Act consisted of 748 sections.

SIR ROBERT REID: Not applicable to this subject. There are not five so applicable.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he differed profoundly from his hon. and learned friend with regard to the number. If they were to set out in the Bill all the sections it was desired to apply, it would certainly make the Bill a very long one and might lead to protracted debate. All they wanted was power to make reasonable regulations for the government of these ships which would enable them to visit foreign ports without putting them under the white ensign. Hitherto when these vessels had visited foreign ports they had been put under a commissioned officer and had been subject to the Naval Discipline Act. They thought that unnecessary. There were a number of vessels of this kind in regard to which it was not necessary that they should be under the Naval Discipline Act, and some provision must be made for them. The right thing was to give power to His Majesty by Order in Council to make such provision for the government of these vessels as seemed fitting and proper. Every point which could be taken in Committee as to restricting the power to make these regulations so as to prevent the possibility of abuse would be most fully considered; but he hoped the House would not be led by any of the phantoms which had been conjured up to refuse a Second Reading to a measure which, he was quite sure, would in every way prove beneficial.

SIR ROBERT REID said the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading stated that the object of the Bill was to allow these ships to go into foreign ports, but the proposals went beyond that. It was a Bill for regulating employment and discipline in these ships.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he himself had never stated that the only object was to enable ships to visit foreign ports. Difficulty had also been felt as to the enforcement of discipline on these vessels to which the Merchant Shipping Act did not apply. Did anybody desire that powers should not be given to the Government in that matter. Some provision must be made, and they would welcome any reasonable precautions to prevent the possibility of abuse.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked the hon. and learned Gentleman if he had any objection to put in a schedule to the Bill the particular regulations that would apply.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said that matter would be considered, but he thought that, in determining what regulations should apply, very minute and prolonged examination would be wanted. Experience might show from time to time that it was desirable to vary the regulations, and it would, in his judgment, make the measure less valuable if they had a cast-iron framework of regulations in an Act of Parliament that could not be altered except by passing another Act.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Are the regulations framed?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he did not know; but he would undertake to bring the regulations before the House when they were framed. It was very necessary that such a power should be contained in this Bill.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said he agreed with his right hon. friend below him that the power asked for was a power not applicable to the Merchant Shipping Act. Why should not this careful and prolonged examination to which the Attorney-General referred be made, and the result submitted to the House? Parliament was asked to accord an absolutely unlimited power of regulating the discipline as well as the employment of persons on these vessels. The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General said it would be much more convenient not to have cast-iron regulations in an Act of Parliament, but to allow modifications to be made from time to time by an Order in Council. But that might be said of any Act which interfered with the liberty of the subject. He did not see that there was any special case for giving this extraordinary power in this particular instance.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said he could not understand the right hon. Gentleman opposite when he talked about the liberty of the subject, for no man was to be compelled to go under the regulations. He suggested that the Bill might be read a second time, and the regulations brought up and inserted on the Committee stage.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said he was unable to imagine what had taken place that ships of this class should suddenly be put under new regulations. The House was entitled to some explanation as to any difficulties that had arisen in controlling the crews of these vessels. These vessels used to sail under the white ensign. When they did that in what way were they distinguished from the ships belonging to the Royal Navy?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: They were under the same discipline.

MR. RUNCIMAN: We want to know why on earth it was necessary to make this change?

MR. PRETYMAN: Purely as a matter of economy. The object is that the expense of the present system may not be continued.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that when the hon. Gentleman came down and said that he wanted this Bill because of the economy which would arise from it, surely he did not mean to say that a large number of men employed on these vessels had been disrated.

MR. PRETYMAN was understood to say "No."

MR. RUNCIMAN said that the reply of the hon. Gentleman showed more than ever why the Bill should be carefully considered. There was a large number of civilians on board these vessels who probably did not want to be brought under the Naval Discipline Act, and these new regulations came in somewhere between the Naval Discipline Act and the Merchant Shipping Act. Why were not these new regulations placed before the House? They ought to be discussed with the Bill and in connection with the Bill. The Government apparently wanted the House to vote this Bill in the dark. They were going to alter the *status* of a large number of British subjects who, up to the present, were under the ordinary law. The case for the Bill, he believed, had been exaggerated. The difficulties which had arisen in the past had been got over; they very seldom arose. These men would be very amenable to discipline, and would be as well under the control of the officers if rated under the Merchant Shipping Act as under regulations of which they knew absolutely nothing. Really, to ask the House to pass a Bill to authorise the King in Council to alter the *status* of men in civil employment who did not wish to come under the Naval Discipline Act, without the Admiralty having first drawn up the new regulations, was a totally improper proceeding.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

EVENING SITTING.

WEST INDIAN COLONIES (ADMINISTRATION).

*MR. LAMONT (Buteshire) said he rose to call the attention of the House to the affairs of a group of colonies to which their attention was but seldom directed. The West Indies, which had been mentioned in a recent debate in connection with the abandonment of the naval base at St. Lucia, as having been the scene of some of the greatest naval battles in our history, by reason of their ancient sorrows had been the battlefield in this House on which repeated contests had been fought out between the forces of two opposing schools of political economy. What he wished the House to consider was whether there might not be causes for these calamities more deeply seated than those suggested by discussions on the Sugar Convention or upon the bounty question, which had caused those calamities to occur again and again and thus to retard that prosperity which was the rule under the British flag elsewhere. They had seen depressions sweep over the West Indies so prolonged in duration, so acute in their character and so constant in their repetition as to almost reveal the paradox of a chronic crisis. Commission after Commission had been appointed to inquire into these calamities, with various terms of reference, with various results, and making various recommendations. The most recent was that in which the right hon. Member for Berwick was a prominent member. That was appointed in 1897. That Commission made very important investigations and important recommendations which had mostly been carried out. An earlier Commission was that which was constituted under Sir Robert Hamilton in 1893–1894 to inquire into the condition of Dominica, and that Commission also made recommendations still more important in their character, which had been partially carried out. The earliest Commission—to which he intended to allude—was appointed in 1884, and it made recommendations of the very highest political value, hardly any of which had been carried out. The Report of the 1884 Commission remained to-day as true, as practical, and as urgent as on the day on which it was written, and it was idle to recommend further inquiries into the condition of the West Indies until those recommendations and the principles underlying them had been carried into effect.

Two great themes ran through all the three volumes of the Report of this Commission. The first was the expediency of bringing the West Indian Colonies more closely together, and the second the desirability of inter-colonial free trade with a tariff in common between the whole of these Colonies, a tariff as low as was compatible with revenue purposes. He wished to persuade the House of the vast importance of these reforms in order to make these colonies not only more prosperous, stronger, and more united, but more self-reliant, and that we should never be able to do so long as each island was under a separate Government. Islands, some of them not larger than those which he had the honour to represent in the House, certainly not richer, and some not more populous, were burdened with all the paraphernalia of the Government of a first-class European State. Governors, colonial secretaries, chief justices, auditor-generals, commandants, attorney-generals, and solicitor-generals were simply jostling one another in the West Indies. Now, governors and chief justices were well enough in moderation; colonial secretaries and attorney-generals, doubtless, had their uses; even solicitor-generals were all very well in their proper place; and he would venture to remind the House that he had the honour to represent a constituency which was a good judge of solicitor-generals and of their proper place. But surely one of each of these dignitaries should be sufficient for a population of 1,500,000. At any rate, one law officer per 100,000 of the population was an altogether excessive allowance. But that was not all. Each island, or each group of islets, had its own separate tariff, imposed, not only against foreign countries and the mother country, but against the other West Indian Colonies, and in the case of the Windward Islands against the other islands in the same colonial group. The West Indies were, in short, the protectionists' paradise; so many islands so many scientific tariffs, and he supposed it ought to be so many scientific tariffs, so many self-sustaining empires. But the West Indies were the reverse of self-sustaining in any sense of the word. He would give the House an instance or two of the conflicting tariffs. Flour, for instance, in Jamaica was subjected to a duty of 8s. a barrel. In Antigua it was 6s. 8d. a barrel, and Trinidad it was 3s. 4d. a barrel. In the Island of Jamaica the *ad valorem* duty imposed averaged 17 per cent., in the Windward Islands 7½ to 15 per cent., while in Trinidad it averaged 5 per cent. Trinidad was the best in most respects as hers was the lowest tariff, although hon. Members opposite might hold that that of Jamaica was the best because it was the highest tariff.

But in many respects the position was even worse now than it was twenty-one years ago. Two of the worst results of the present system were an excess of highly-paid officials and a chaos of tariffs. A third was the inadequate and unsuitable character of the system of education. There was still no scientific and technical training, and it was only within the last seven or eight years that there had been any agricultural education, either primary or secondary, and the fact that there was any at all was due to the Report of the 1897 Commission, and the able and splendid work done by Sir Daniel Morris. The present system had two defects—it stopped short at secondary education, and agricultural education was confined almost entirely to children of the peasant and artisan class. He wanted scientific training for the captains and non-commissioned officers of industry as well as for the private soldiers. The backwardness of the sugar industry was due to the apathy displayed regarding higher education. The responsibility for providing such education had lain, not with the planters and landowners, but with successive Governments. The 1897 Commissioners recommended the establishment of central factories for turning out a modern class of sugar, but he submitted that it would be useless to establish such factories unless in the first place they established central factories for turning out a modern class of men. It would be impossible for the West Indies to compete with the skilled men turned out by America and Germany until they had scientifically trained chemists for work in factory and field. No one colonial Government could take up this great problem, but if there were a strong central Government for all, it would be quite in its power to deal with what was the crying need of the islands and set up a central technical University for all the West Indies. Such a University should take over the work of the present Imperial Department of Agriculture and affiliate to itself the various secondary agricultural schools, which had been established in the islands as the result of the recommendations of the 1897 Commission, and it should also take over for the purposes of teaching the experimental stations which had existed for some years in the islands. At present the young men of the middle class had only two professions to follow, they either became doctors or lawyers in colonies glutted with law and medicine. They should have the opportunity of education in the great industries on which the prosperity of the colonies must for all time depend.

The Colonial Secretary would have appreciated, he thought, the importance of having a central West Indian Government to deal with during the mail contract negotiations. He might be congratulated upon having stumbled on the right solution by accident, if he might say so without offence, of having no contract at all. It would be for the benefit of all concerned; it would probably result in more frequent and efficient service, and would be no injury to the Royal Mail Company, while at the same time other lines would be induced to compete for a share of the traffic and thus bring about a system of free trade in mails which would have all the benefits that free trade and fair competition brought. The case for administrative federation could not be better put than it was by Sir Robert Hamilton in his Report of 1894, in which he recommended for the British Antilles an administrator with specially delegated powers, and through whom communications with the Colonial Office should pass. The federal capital should, however, not be in either Barbados, Trinidad, or Jamaica, because it would undoubtedly create jealousy in those two islands which were not selected for the seat of the capital. It should be located in one of the lesser islands, St. Lucia, for instance, and there it would be some compensation for the loss of the naval base. But wherever that capital was located the Government should have a large steam yacht to convey the Administration from time to time to the different islands. The 1897 Commissioners considered the necessity of a steam yacht as a great argument against federation. It depended, he thought, on whether Britannia ruled the waves, or whether it was the waves that ruled Britannia. He believed that Britannia ruled the waves, and that, to the first maritime power, the calm and placid waters of the tropics formed not an insuperable barrier, but a cheap and easy means of communication. The best form of government would be a strong central Administration, under a benevolent despot. Difficult as it was to find such a man, it was still more so to find a benevolent oligarchy, and to an oligarchy government in some of the West Indies closely approximated. This was why so little attention had been paid to one of the most important recommendations of the Commission of 1897. Among these, and recurred to again and again by the Commission, was the settlement of peasant proprietors on the Crown lands. In spite of neglect by local governments —notably in Trinidad—some progress had been made in this direction, but there should be an organised plan of settlement on suitable areas with extension of means of transport. But instead of this the Crown lands had been given out on no definite plan or system, and, as a rule, no means of transport had been provided for the peasant proprietors, and the result had been an uneconomic system of squatting which had been of no advantage to the colonies, no advantage to the great established industries, nor to the squatters themselves. Having outlined the policy which he believed this House should take with regard to the West Indian Colonies, he thanked the House for the indulgence shown to a new and nervous Member. He asked for no Imperial grants, and rather deprecated that form of assistance. Such grants reminded him of the action of the heraldic pelican drawing blood from the breast for her young, an action generous to the verge of Quixotism, but at the same time indicating some lack of fertility of resource on the part of the pelican. The policy which he advocated was one which he believed would conduce far more largely to the lasting prosperity of those ancient colonies. He begged to move.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to extend federal institutions in the British West Indies, in order to improve and to cheapen the administration of those colonies."—(*Mr. Lamont.*)

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the admirable speech of his hon. friend showed that they should have in him an acquisition to the debating power of the House. Not only did his speech contain good matter, but it was relieved by an amount of humour which showed that he, at all events, would be able to treat serious questions in a pleasant fashion. If he rose to move the Amendment of which he had given notice on the Paper, it was not because he differed from the speech of his hon. friend in any way, but for reasons which had been discussed in previous Parliaments. The remedies would, he thought, have to be more drastic for the evils his hon. friend had pointed out. As regarded those evils, he agreed with him entirely, and if he had any criticism to make, it was that he had spoken as though the problem was still one of the sugar industry, whereas now, happily perhaps, sugar had receded into the background as regarded production in the West Indies, and other commodities had taken its place. His hon. friend had gone very far in the direction in which he would ask the House to go still further, when at the beginning of his speech he asked for colonial free trade; and although his hon. friend dwelt on free trade in the West Indies, he did not think that he intended to limit it to the West Indies. Judging from the reasons he gave, his hon. friend desired to have free trade between the West Indies and the Dominion of Canada. That meant free food in the West Indies, where at present the taxation was levied mainly upon food. All desired to cheapen the Government of the West Indies and to take away from the Colonial Office any patronage which was mere patronage exercised to the detriment of the islands. But the main evil was the oligarchic system of government, and the throwing of taxation entirely upon the working classes for food and clothing. The remedy suggested meant giving up a large proportion of the present Customs revenue of the island. It did not mean giving up the present Customs revenue levied upon the export of cotton goods from this country to those islands, which was a substantial portion of their revenue. The revenue was mainly raised upon the food and clothing of the working classes, that upon clothing, which consisted of Manchester cotton goods and in a secondary degree, of slop clothing. Although the West Indies sent us a larger value of cocoa than the amount of Manchester cotton goods which we sent to them to clothe their working classes, the amount of those cotton goods was far larger than the amount of sugar they sent to us.

To what did those facts point? They all wished to cheapen and improve the Government of the West Indies. The patronage had not always been so well exercised that it could be regarded as a credit to the Empire. He did not wish to attack the Colonial Secretary or his predecessor, or any particular Colonial Secretary, but during the time the present Colonial Secretary was at the Bar he probably became aware of the scandals of certain legal patronage in the West Indies which had certainly led to at least two lunatics being sent, and within the knowledge of that House there had been another suspected of being insane. The Colonial Office thought he was mad.

There was next the remedy of further federation, a remedy which he believed the West Indies, generally speaking, were agreed about. But federation upon what terms? There his hon. friend stopped short; he condemned what he called, and rightly called, the oligarchic system of the present government, and he suggested that one great official from home—one despot—would be the remedy. If they could not introduce a government for the people in the West Indies he (Sir Charles Dilke) admitted that such a proposal was infinitely better than the existing system of government, but he should be sorry to admit there were not at least some of the islands fitted for more demoractic government. He doubted whether it would be wise to aim at uniformity in the government of the islands. The matter was discussed in this House in 1896 and 1897, and the then Colonial Secretary supported the oligarchic system. Some of them then asserted that either a benevolent despot or some democratic system of government, in some, at all events, of the islands, would be better than the oligarchic system, but the Colonial Secretary defended the oligarchic system as being the best. In the West Indies as in Ireland those who had declined to trust a representative body of people had attempted the opposite plan of killing Home Rule by kindness. A system of doles had been given by those afraid to trust the people, and whenever any attempt had been made to widen the suffrage, the answer had always been "Look at Haiti." Anything was better than the elective system such as existed in many of the islands at present, and which was a mere shadow of an elective system among a very limited class, whose own interests were different from the labouring class, which formed the majority. Members were apt to look upon Barbados as having the most liberal Constitution of the islands, yet in Barbados he believed less than one in 120 of the inhabitants formed the electorate. It was a mere pretence of an elective system, and was in fact an oligarchy, a government by a small body of persons whose interests, notably in taxation, were different from those of the great majority. It would be impossible to maintain a system which levied more than a half of the whole of the expense of this unduly costly government on the food and clothing of the people if there were a wider electoral basis. Experimentally he thought a more democratic system might be tried in some of the islands, and he agreed with his hon. friend that if they could not, or would not, widely extend that system, then the plan which his hon. friend proposed was infinitely better than the present one.

It would be impossible, with a High Commissioner, to maintain such a fiscal system as that in the islands at the present time. He would quote the opinion of one who was formerly Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and had intimately studied the question from the Government point of view, and carried weight in the House. He referred to Mr. Leonard Courtney, who had just published a new edition of his book called the "Working Constitution," in which he used the following words with regard to the West Indies—

> "The Governors were from early times associated with representative institutions which sometimes claimed to control taxation. Had the claim been effectually established responsible government must have followed. When

it has been found impossible to overcome the . . . local Assemblies by other means they have been suppressed."

Of Jamaica he said—

> "In 1900 Mr. Chamberlain placed the nominated members of the Assembly in a majority."

Of the West Indies generally Mr. Courtney said—

> "Where the character of the mass of the population forbids the establishment of throughly democratic principles the determination of authority oscillates between government from at home and government by a privileged racial minority. The existing political organisation of the West Indian Islands cannot be regarded as permanent. Some movement must be expected either towards a clearer establishment of the authority of the delegate of the Crown or towards fresh experiments in responsible government.

With those words he entirely agreed, and he thought the time had come when they must face the fact that a more drastic remedy than merely federation was required, and that the time had come to try a democratic government in the islands ready for it; and, if not, to adopt the benevolent despotism suggested by his hon. friend. Take the two great islands doing the largest trade. Jamaica and Trinidad exported about the same amount of products. Jamaica exported about £2,250,000 worth, of which sugar was less than £250,000. Trinidad's exports were £2,500,000 sterling, of which sugar was less than £500,000. They had already reached the time, therefore, when sugar had taken a back place. As the peasant proprietors increased in numbers more and more attention would be paid to fruit and to products like ginger and arrowroot. In the case of Jamaica there were already 120,000 persons holding less than ten acres apiece. His hon. friend spoke of the decline in the prosperity of the islands. The decline was often taken for granted, but it hardly bore examination tried by the test of figures. Look at the money the islands were raising by taxation at the present time of so-called ruin as compared with the period of slavery and so-called prosperity. In the most palmy days of the sugar industry the total revenue of the islands was under £500,000 sterling a year; now it was £2,500,000 sterling, and was rapidly increasing. That enormous revenue was raised under an oligarchic system, and the only way to get rid of such a fiscal system was to give place to democratic interests. Far more than half of the taxation was levied from Customs, and chiefly upon the necessaries of the poor, except in Jamaica, where it was only a third, thus reducing the average to a half. The average duties mainly raised upon food and cheap clothing were 15 per cent., taking the whole islands through.

Then look at the grievances of the working population. A large portion of the money, for example, raised in Trinidad from taxation was spent in introducing the destitute alien to compete with the native population. In South Africa the Kaffir had not been made to pay directly for bringing the Chinaman in, and in this country the destitute alien came in without being paid to do so, but in the case of the British West Indies, as M. de Lanessan, the French Minister of Marine, had pointed out, there was a working population taxed upon the food and other necessaries of life to bring in the people who were to compete with them in their land. His hon. friend had very properly suggested that although he was opposed as he (Sir Charles Dilke) was to a policy of doles, this country owed the West Indies some consideration on account of the sudden cessation of local expenditure on our Navy and Army, which from loans besides that from taxes, since 1896 amounted to £1,500,000 sterling. He moved as an Amendment "That no change in institutions of the British West Indies will be satisfactory which does not recognise the predominant interest of the majority of the taxpayers in the administration of the colonies."

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'no change in the institutions of the British West Indies will be satisfactory which does not recognise the predominant interest of the majority of the taxpayers in the administration of the Colonies.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke*)—instead thereof

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket, said he should have liked the honour of seconding the Resolution, because, although he did not see eye to eye with his hon. friend, he was exceedingly glad that the question should be open for discussion, and he made no secret of the fact that he should have liked to have been the first to congratulate his fellow-countyman upon his excellent first appearance in the House. It was most appropriate that on his first appearance he should have delivered so excellent a speech upon a subject of which he was so well entitled to speak by virtue of his intimate connection and acquaintance with the West Indies. No one who heard the speech could doubt that his earnest desire for the federation of those islands was dictated by the wish that they should become a stronger part of our Imperial organisation by reason of that union which was supposed always to give strength. All were anxious to see the West Indies stronger than they were at present, less dependent upon the mother country, and more largely inhabited by the white races of energy and initiative. Especially was that the case when these islands of the Carribean Sea were likely to assume, in the immediate future, a position of gigantic international strategic and commercial importance consequent upon the making of the Panama Canal, and to become, as they were in the days of Cromwell and Nelson, once more the nerve centre of our maritime power in the future. Not only so, but these islands of the Carribean Archipelago were outposts, as Captain Mahan told them, of the Panama Canal itself as surely as Aden was an outpost of the Suez Canal. The fact that Nelson went to the protection of those islands, and risked the security of the English Channel in so doing, afforded a gauge of the value set at that time upon the West Indies, isolated as they were from one another in the days of sailing ships, and a measure of their enhanced importance now that could be united by a service of fast steam vessels.

He agreed with his hon. friend that these islands should be kept strong. The question was, would federation do this? Could a legislative bond enacted by this country cement together many islands of greatly varying conditions, different creeds, and widely different states of prosperity? The only common basis for federation that he had been able to discover was the common basis of complete dependence on the mother country. He could not say he had found them anxious to advance with a stride to legislative and financial independence. On the contrary, their first impulse in times of pressure, or at times likely to lead to pressure, was not to help themselves but to come to the British Treasury for assistance. Nor could he wonder at it: for the black population had no true sense of independence and, since the abolition of slavery the white population had been, to use a vulgar expression, spoon-fed by the British Treasury. In addition, nature seemed to have heaped up all her horrors and poured them down upon the head of these islands, and the vitality of both white and black races seemed to be totally unable to cope with them. Nothing would disturb the inhabitants of the West Indies more at the present moment, when all the islands were financially sick, than to think that anything was being done to weaken their hold on the heart and purse of the British Treasury. The idea of a Federal Legislature under a beneficent despot might be dismissed as impracticable. Questions of distance and climate militated against any scheme of a great central administration. The second scheme of federation was that of grouping, with a Federal Legislature super-imposed upon local Legislatures in the different islands. This plan left Jamaica practically as at present, grouped Trinidad with British Guiana, and the Windward and Leeward Islands with Barbados. Outside the Treasury difficulty, which would always abide, this plan had less inherent difficulties than the system of a central federal administration. But even under the grouping system, the residents in British Guiana would probably declare it to be a thousand pities that their colony should be grouped with Trinidad, seeing that British Guiana had prospects of gold and diamonds before it, and might shortly become so rich that it would have to be treated under quite a different system; while the people of Barbados would object to the alteration of the second oldest Colonial Constitution under the British flag. In any case it would be very difficult to destroy the local Legislatures or to superimpose upon them the federal central body suggested by the Resolution; and his hon. friend would probably agree that it should not be done without the consent of the great majority of the inhabitants of the islands.

He doubted whether much economy would be effected by federation. There would probably be scores of letters of protest against every proposal to abolish any of the existing posts. The residents and natives were extremely proud of their officials; and, even if many of the smaller posts were dispensed with, it was questionable whether the necessary work could be done by fewer men in the trying conditions that obtained unless much larger salaries were paid. It was not actual administration that cost so much in the West Indies, but education, poor relief, and the distribution of medicine. He admitted that the West Indies were not in a satisfactory state at the present time; but the proposal to extend to them responsible government could not be entertained in view of the slight interest of the inhabitants in political life. He could not help thinking that the right hon. Baronet opposite was mistaken in the figures he had given to the House.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the figures he gave purported to be the numbers on the electoral roll.

*MR. MALCOLM suggested that possibly 16,000 had power to vote, but only 1,600 exercised their power. At any rate very little political interest was shown by the black inhabitants of the islands. If the solution suggested by his hon. friend of a federal central authority was wrong, and if the solution of the right hon. Baronet was equally inapplicable, then least of all were the West Indies likely to gain strength through the policy of the Government at the present time in abandoning St. Lucia as a naval base and denuding the West Indies of British white troops. In warning the Colonial Secretary against this strange military and naval change, with the permission of the House he would read an extract from a letter he had recently received from a resident proprietor in Jamaica, as follows—

> "The military advisers of the Army Council seem to have forgotten the Gordon riots, and the Bedwell troubles which took place not long ago; and only just now a man who calls himself Prince Mackaroo or some such name has been disposed of, after asking the negroes for 600 men to enable him to introduce reforms. So long as the police are backed by white troops these things can be dealt with, but no longer. People in England are apt to think that all police are like the wonderful police of London; and yet when the Hyde Park railings were thrown down even they had to confess themselves unable to cope with the mob. The worst to be feared there was for a few panes of glass; here it would be murder and arson."

He also quoted the following from a New Orleans paper as showing how the matter was looked at from a purely outside point of view—

> "The garrisons of British troops are to be entirely removed and the colonies permitted to do without military altogether or provide it themselves. While the withdrawal of Imperial troops from Canada and Australia would cause little trouble, as both those Commonwealths are amply able to safeguard their own borders by local troops, with the West India Colonies the case is entirely different. In every one of these islands the black or coloured population exceeds the whites by twenty or thirty to one. The whites fear, and with justice, that with the troops removed the colonies would always be in danger of uprisings of blacks against the whites, and with the former in such overwhelming superiority it would be easy to repeat the experience of San Domingo. The white residents of the British West India Islands are very naturally much perturbed over the situation, as they may very well be. People who are familiar with the race problem in the Southern States can readily sympathise with the fears of the people of the West Indies. . . . It seems incredible that the British Government should meditate such a supreme act of folly as the withdrawal of all troops from the West Indies with the conditions in the islands such as they are."

This particular policy of His Majesty's Government was the least likely of all to contribute to the strength of the West Indies. His own solution would be to wait until cotton-growing and other industries in the islands could enable them to pay their way before altering the Constitution. He would then like to see the Government enter into negotiations with Canada in order to find out whether some of the islands, at any rate, could not be better administered by that great Dominion than they were by the home Government.

If the West India Islands were attached to Canada they would form something like a southern zone for the Dominion. The reorganisation and the revitalising of the West Indies would result; and the alteration would add enormously to our Imperial strength on the strategic highway of the world and in the commercial centre of the New World.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said that no one could visit the West Indies without feeling that nature had been unusually prodigal to them, or without desiring that they should attain a prosperity commensurate with the gifts of nature. These islands, as some of the oldest and most interesting portions of our Colonial Empire, had a claim on the sympathy and the interest of the mother-country. He agreed with the view that when the Panama Canal was made a streams of oceanic traffic would pass through these islands, and a chance would come to them which they had not for a long time enjoyed of being associated with the great trade movements of the world. His hon. friend had dwelt upon the desirability of improving the financial condition of the islands, first, by the simplification or consolidation of the Administration, and, secondly, by the abolition of tariffs between the different islands. One could scarcely conceive anything more absurd than that there should exist high tariffs, or, indeed, any tariffs at all, among islands which ought to be regarded as one fiscal entity. It was difficult to understand why the home Government should have allowed these duties to grow up, for they must have the effect of interfering with the free exchange of commodities among the islands.

The other question was whether a considerable saving might not be effected in their executive and judicial administration. He might explain that his own personal knowledge was confined to Jamaica, and that he regarded British Guiana as being in a somewhat different position from the other islands. Many of the islands were too small to require the sort of civil administration which we now gave them. That, he thought, particularly applied to the judicial administration. He did not see why, instead of having an official who was called the Chief Justice for each island, they could not have a somewhat simpler and more comprehensive judicial organisation, which, while having competent police magistrates for the local work would give a better kind of law by way of appeal, and allow the highest judicial officers or Court to travel about from island to island and administer civil justice in that way. In the same way they would have a more efficient Executive Administration if they organised it on a larger scale and brought a certain number of the islands into a comprehensive scheme. There would doubtless be objections on the part of individual islands; they would not want to be deprived of the kind of importance they now possessed; but he would meet that line of argument by saying that any economies that were effected in this way, and they might be considerable, ought to be devoted to improving the islands themselves in the way of railway improvements, modernising methods of cultivation, and so forth. A good deal might be done in this way for education, and more might be done for the industrial and technical instruction of the negroes. The great difficulty of the islands was the imperfect quality of the labour. If they gave the natives a better industrial instruction it would give them a permanent upward movement, the result of which would be felt in many directions, and would have a far-reaching effect upon their prosperity and the character of the population. He trusted that the Colonial Secretary might be able to hold out some hope that these economies, which would have to q, carried out with consideration and tacta might be effected. So far as Jamaica was concerned, he did not think any apprehension need be entertained at present of danger to society by reducing the number of troops. The population was peaceful and contented, and he should be surprised to hear that those who knew the islands thought it was in any danger of relapsing into a state of disturbance.

Sir J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): There were the Trinidad riots.

Mr. MALCOLM: Only six weeks ago there was this trouble with a so-called prince.

MR. BRYCE said he did not mean to suggest that we should altogether withdraw white troops. Those who knew what the great capabilities of the West Indies were, and recognised that we owed something not only to the white but also to the negro population, would feel that we had a serious duty towards the islands, and that we must not forget that they constituted a valuable and interesting part of our Colonial Empire.

*MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said the House was indebted to the mover of the Resolution for bringing so interesting a subject forward. It was a misfortune that they did not devote more time to considering the particular interests of the different colonies in detail, as they were enabled by this Motion to do to-night in reference to the West Indies. It was not difficult to make out a good case for the reduction of official expenses and charges or for the abolition of tariffs between the various islands, or an improved system of higher education. He very much appreciated the line of argument adopted by the mover of this Motion up to the point of the remedy he suggested, which he thought was hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of the case. A benevolent despot might be an ideal remedy if it was a practical one, but he did not think that it would meet the case. The alternative suggested in the Amendment seemed to him to be altogether too drastic for the present time. The quotation which had been given from Sir Robert Hamilton to the effect that the time was not yet, in his opinion pretty much met the case. Hon. Members hardly appeared to realise the varying conditions of these islands. Scarcely any two of the islands in their conditions were alike, and their prosperity was also very varied. Some of the islands had found it possible to change their cultivation of sugar into more profitable growths. Other islands had not found this to be possible, and the islands best adapted for the growth of sugar were not always best adapted for cocoa or bananas. There was also a great difference in the population. Some parts of the population were more impregnated with modern ideas, and other islands were absolutely indifferent as to progress. Consequently any cut-and-dried scheme would be likely to prove a disappointment.

In regard to what had been said about responsible government, he should like to know if this House would attempt to veto any wild scheme that it might be within the power of some enterprising contractor to make with such a form of government. Take, for example, what actually occurred in Newfoundland. There it was shown to be possible for a large contractor to practically get the whole island at his disposal. A large majority of the people there wished the veto to be put upon what amounted to nothing less than the sale of the island to a railway contractor by the Government, but the Colonial Secretary was not favourable to the exercise of that veto. Newfoundland was a responsible self-governing colony, and ever since the conclusion of the contract the people of the colony had been paying large sums of money in trying to get rid of that most unfortunate contract. That might easily be the case with the larger measures of self-goverment which had been suggested. Take the religious question. That was a subject which even in this country divided them in their opinions, and caused bitterness even when they were able to discuss it from a broad point of view. They would be able to judge from that fact how acute the religious question might become in those islands. As an illustration he might mention what had happened in the Island of Guernsey in 1904. They passed a law for that island which placed the whole of the elementary education of the children under the control of the Anglican Church, and it was ordained that the doctrines of the Church of England should be taught in all the elementary schools. What was more, this was agreed to and approved by the Privy Council on the advice of the Member for East Fife, then Home Secretary. He gave that as an illustration to show that the veto could not so easily be imposed when they once granted responsible self-government except under very exceptional circumstances. Those were some of the practical difficulties which would arise if the Amendment was carried. He thought they must endeavour to improve the government by the steady infusion of the popular and representative element, so that the best men available, irrespective of colour, should be utilised in the government of these islands.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he had listened very carefully to the speeches of the mover of the Motion and the mover of the Amendment, and he had failed altogether to notice any discordant note whatever in them. The hon. Member for Buteshire laid great stress upon the necessity of simplifying the Administration in those islands, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean only carried them a step further with regard to the self-government of those islands. He was sorry that the hon. Member for Buteshire did not give them more details about the enormous waste of material and the great cost of the Administration, and no doubt the reason was that he did not desire to occupy too much time. Nevertheless the main point of his argument throughout was the great waste of material and money upon the salaries of officials in those islands. He desired the House to look at this question even from the point of view of the task imposed upon the Colonial Secretary. The amount of work and responsibility thrown upon the Minister who happened to occupy that important position was something overwhelming and appalling. If instead of the vast amount of correspondence he had at present to deal with over every little local affair in the West Indies, he had a Governor-General to deal with those matters, the right hon. Gentleman's task would be enormously lessened and the affairs of those islands would be conducted very much more in harmony with the wishes of the people. He had no objection to the governor having a steam yacht, because in those islands a yacht would practically be his motor-car. He thought that the suggestion which had been made to hand over the West Indies to the Dominion of Canada would involve them in considerable trouble and was not worthy of a moment's consideration. The West Indies were at the present moment of enormous importance, and would be of still greater importance in the future. He thought the hon. Member for Buteshire had rendered an extremely valuable service by bringing this question before the House and giving them such an extremely instructive speech upon this important subject.

*MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) pointed out that the disproportion between the whites and the blacks in all those colonies was very great. Up and down the West Indies the electors would be blacks. It would be well to look outside to see how other countries met the great black question. In the Southern States of America, where the question was acute, it had been made acute by extending the suffrage to the blacks. As things were, there was, practically speaking, little racial feeling at all in these islands. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen had been for a few days in Jamaica, and he wished to endorse what the right hon. Gentleman had said about there being no racial feeling there. He had met an American engineer in that island, and he said that any man, woman, or child might go up and down that island, night or day, without any fear of injury, but he could not say the same thing of the Southern States. He thought that was a very high compliment to their institutions, which for several centuries had been gradually evolving themselves to their present state. He agreed that in some of the islands this oligarchy which had been spoken of was not at all perfect in its operations; and when they considered the great difficulty which they had to face, namely, that there was only a very small minority of whites and a great preponderance of blacks, it was clear that they could not lay down any hard-and-fast rule, and notions which were formed here were not always suitable to be carried out on the Spanish Main. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had referred to the present system as being prejudicial to the advance of the system of peasant proprietors. That certainly was not true in regard to many of those islands. He thought the important question was whether these people should not devote themselves more to the exportation of goods than the mere cultivation of provisions. In British Guiana there was an enormous exportation of goods to the great advantage of the community, whereas in Jamaica, an island where there was the largest amount of small proprietors, the amount of their export trade was practically *nil.*

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said they exported from that island, in fruit alone, about £1,500,000 in 1904.

*Mr. LAWRENCE said that was not grown by the small proprietors. Apparently in the case of right hon. Gentlemen opposite this was an instance where a little knowledge was a dangerous thing. He had been informed that a large company which had introduced the banana industry in Jamaica was contemplating going back to sugar production, and this in regard to an estate which had grown bananas for many years. He thought that showed that it was not by any means true that the production of sugar was receding. He congratulated the hon. Member for Buteshire upon his speech, but more that he had to approach the subject of the West Indies under more favourable auspices than those of recent years. The hon. Member had spoken of the educational advantages of Germany and Louisiana, and had made a comparison in regard to the backwardness of education in the West Indies. He wished, however, to remind the hon. Member that both those countries were strongly protective in regard to the sugar industry. After the abolition of slavery, the West Indies had to contend against the slave-owing sugar grown in Brazil, and then came the bounty system. He agreed that considerable economy might be effected by amalgamating certain islands under one Government, and particularly in reducing the judicial establishment. The islands had every reason to complain of the class of men sent out there to fill the legal posts. He knew lawyers, who, though they never had a brief in this country, blossomed into Judges in the West Indies. It was time to see that men fit to fill the posts were sent out, and that they gave a good year's work for a good year's salary.

*Sir BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said he had listened with very great interest to the speech of the mover of this Motion, and he associated himself most heartily with the views which he had placed before the House. The late Lord Carnarvon had in his mind some scheme for federating these West Indian Colonies, and nobody could doubt the immense advantage that would be derived from an uniform Customs tariff. It was an open question as to how far it would be possible to combine all the West Indian Colonies under one Governor-General. But the four groups of islands which formed the Lesser Antilles, contained a population which did not exceed some 600,000 or 700,000, and he thought they would gain very much if they could be placed under one Administration. It did not much matter where the seat of Government was, because the time of the Governor would be spent mostly in his yacht. He hoped the subject of the government of the West India Islands would have the serious attention of the Colonial Office, for he felt sure that if the islands were to be made happy, contented, and prosperous, it was not by maintaining large garrisons there, but by good government and efficient administration.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) said that with the Amendment of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean in the abstract he had no quarrel at all. Although kindly and generous, the proposal was impracticable. The system had been tried in America of giving in comparatively uncivilised communities equal rights of voting to the coloured population, with the result of greatly embittering racial feeling and tempting the whites to action practically cancelling the advantages. The working out of the native problem in South Africa also illustrated the impracticability of the proposition; and he respectfully said that the right hon. Gentleman had not made out that part of his case, and, indeed, had hardly tried to make it out. With the right hon. Gentleman's other suggestion, that a benevolent despotism should be established, he was much more in agreement; but neither did he think that a practical proposal at the present moment. They must, after all, have regard to the feelings of the islanders themselves; and the right hon. Gentleman was well aware that some of those colonies formerly enjoyed what was practically self-government. In Barbados the white population had decreased very much. Between 200 and 300 years ago there was a white population both actually larger than at present, and relatively larger in proportion to the blacks; and the Barbadians of Charles II.'s day had a very stout view of their Parliamentary privileges and resented the idea of being governed by this country without consultation. About 1660 or 1670 they actually made a suggestion, which was, perhaps, the first mention of Imperial federation, that certain members of their own Parliament should attend the Imperial Parliament. Jamaica had had elective representative institutions since 1662, with the exception of a few years. It would not be possible for this Parliament to express an intention of governing these islands as despots when the most considerable of them had enjoyed representative government for so many years. It was not the fact that the interests of the negroes were neglected by the so-called oligarchies. If we were free to take action without regard to history or tradition, there might be a good deal to be said for making the government of these islands more autocratic; but the House would not find it practicable in view of their history to make so violent and revolutionary a change.

With much of the general tenor and many of the sentiments of the mover of the Resolution he had no quarrel, and he desired to identify himself with the compliments the mover had received on the ability with which he presented his case. No doubt the "man in the street" supposed that the West Indies were a group of islands similar in character and homogeneous in population; and when such a man, looking superficially at the matter, learned that there was a separate Government in Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, the Windward Islands, and the Leeward Islands, and that there were three separate Governments in the Windwards and five in the Leewards, he was startled, and thought unification was not only necessary, but should be at once provided for. But the premises were not quite accurate. There was a very wide geographical separation of these islands. It took four days to get from Jamaica to Barbados; and when they spoke of a benevolent despot situated in Barbados having effective knowledge of Jamaica, the colonies might present an argument to which there would be little answer. It would be regarded as a very extraordinary proposal if they were asked to federate the Isle of Man with Madeira, but the distance was not very much less from Barbados to Jamaica than it was from the Isle of Man to Madeira. Communication was not at all good; it cost money to make it better, and the House of Com-Commons did not like paying large subsidies to the West Indian Islands in addition to those which it already gave. Moreover, there were very great historical differences. Barbados and Jamaica had, from first to last during the two to three centuries in which they had been British colonies, been entirely British; Trinidad was in origin a Spanish colony; and British Guiana was once a Dutch possession. In several of the colonies, in Dominica and St. Lucia, for instance, a French *patois* was talked, and there was therefore great difference of language. The products differed and the systems of law varied in the islands. These were all very substantial differences. But he did not wish for a moment to deny that there was very much community of interest and of sentiment in the West Indies as a whole.

The proposal of appointing a Governor-General had a great attraction to many people at the present time. He had been pressed to appoint Governor-Generals in West Africa and East Africa, and now in the West Indies. He had no doubt that it would be a great relief to the Colonial Office if a distinguished man of the type, say, of Lord Cromer, could be induced to take such an office and remain for a long time in one of these great regions to carry out a continuous and definite policy. He had looked into the matter with great care and anxiety, because the idea was an attractive one; but his personal opinion was that these proposals were premature simply because of the physical obstacles in the way. Until they had railways, or, at any rate, good roads, the difficulty of getting about these great regions would be immense, and the burden of travelling placed upon the Governor-Generals would be almost intolerable. In the West Indies communication was not sufficiently good to make it easy to travel; and whereas, among a number of different communities, speaking different languages, with different institutions and different kinds of commerce, they wanted a man to spend a continuous time in their midst, they would have a man who would only be able to spend a few weeks sporadically throughout the year in one or other of the islands.

The authorities on this subject, it would be noted, were very reserved on the point. It was perfectly true that in 1884 a Royal Commission did recommend, not the federation, but the unification, of Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica, and Tobago; and some advance, at any rate, had been made towards carrying out that recommendation. Then in 1894 Sir Robert Hamilton went rather further, and recommended an administrative union which might ultimately lead to federation; but it was very important to note that that able administrator concluded his Report with the proviso that, if any union of these colonies was to be achieved, in order that it might rest on a solid basis it must come as a spontaneous growth from within the colonies themselves. Then in 1897 another very strong Royal Commission was appointed, and the Commissioners—Sir Henry Norman, the right hon. Member for Berwick, and Sir David Barbour—were against federation altogether and spoke of it as doubtful economy. They spoke of the possible union of Barbados, the Windward and the Leeward Islands, but only when an improved system of steam communication had been in existence for some years. He wished the House to understand that union was the policy of His Majesty's Government, a union, however, not forced upon the colonies, but one which they hoped would come from within and result from various administrative operations. It was said very often that sentiment should not be allowed to militate against cash results, but he thought that it would be useless and unwise to disregard the sentiment of the islanders in dealing with this matter, and it must be remembered that these islands valued their traditions and history all the more because they were more prosperous and distinguished in former times.

The aim of His Majesty's Government was not to coerce the colonies into accepting federal government, but to promote measures of administration from which union might naturally spring. The Imperial Department of Agriculture had done some admirable work in promoting a feeling of unity, and an annual agricultural conference was held. There were some common regulations in regard to public health, such as in respect of quarantine matters, and they had endeavoured to obtain some uniformity in Customs, but the difficulties were extremely great owing to the financial necessities of the islands. The land tax being the utmost that could be imposed, it was not possible to raise the required revenue without resorting to duties on imports, but, as a fact, these were imposed for revenue purposes only. There had been no suggestion during the debate of any other system of taxation. Economy of administration had been effected by the loan of expert officials by one island to another, and in this liberal way had assistance been given to poorer neighbours, and links of unity had been established among the populations of the different islands. These were, of course, gradual and patient operations; but he believed it would be wiser to let amalgamation work out in that way and to let the expression of the desire come from the colonists rather than to endeavour to impose it as a policy upon them.

A word or two should be said in reply to allusions to cost of administration. The right hon. Member for Aberdeen had referred to the excellent work done by a Judge whom he mentioned, and while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking he referred to the Colonial Office list to see what salary this excellent lawyer and efficient administrator received, and he found that this gentleman, who might be called Chief Justice, received about a third of the amount paid to a London magistrate —£500 a year. It must be allowed that his services were given at a cheap rate. There were a number of such cases of salaries ranging from £700 to £1,000 per annum—in the smaller islands rarely more than £800. The Administrator of Dominica, distinguished among the Leeward Islands as having a kind of Home Rule of its own, joined to great administrative qualities high financial abilities, and his salary was £1,000. That could not be considered exorbitant. There were a number of officials, but their salaries were not high, ranging from £300 to £400 a year, and he doubted whether with amalgamation economy could be effected in this respect. The Royal Commission of 1897 gave a dubious note on this question. Efforts to cut down some offices had met with consideration. In the Leeward Islands the number of Supreme Court Judges had been reduced from three to two, the reduction meeting with unanimous opposition, and in St. Vincent the treasurership had been abolished and the work put on the Administrator, with the result that the latter was overweighted with office work and unable to visit the outlying districts of the island.

The Government agreed in principle that it was desirable to have unification, but the present moment was not an opportune one for moving in the direction of a constitutional change. The colonies were still writhing under the economic losses and physical distresses from which they had suffered in recent years, and the Government thought that the endeavours which were being made to reconstitute the fabric of economic prosperity had better not be interrupted by constitutional experiments. Progress was being made in regard to agriculture, sugar, fruit-growing, and other industries of that kind, and political conditions should be left at rest for a short time. The adoption of the principles of unification would be better achieved by patiently waiting for a while before further proposals were made. He hoped that this Motion would not be pressed to a division, for the Government would be unwilling to oppose a policy of unification.

Sir EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) said he had not got anything to add to the debate which was of any great value or novelty. The Report of the Royal Commission of which he was a member had been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary. He had very pleasant recollections of the Commission eight years ago. It was true that the Commission did not report in favour of the federation of the West Indies as a whole. But the primary object of the Commission was not to inquire into the question of federation. They were sent out to deal with the acute economic distress that prevailed at that time in the West Indian Islands, and to recommend substantial remedies for that state of things. It was only from that point of view that they looked at the question of federation. He was glad to think that the acute distress had been very much ameliorated since those times. The Report of the West Indian Commission did distinctly encourage a beginning in unification. How far matters might be more ripe for a step towards federation than they were at the time the Commission was in the islands he was not sure. It was quite possible that if the Commission reviewed the circumstances of the islands as they were to-day they might report still more in favour of federation than they did some years ago. Certainly, after going through the islands for two months, the impression left on his mind was that he had seen more Chief Justices than he had ever seen in his life before, or was ever likely to see. The Colonial Secretary had said that these Chief Justices, or some of them, only had small salaries—that was to say, the title was an imposing one, but the salary was the reverse of imposing and was not to be regarded as a great burden on the colony. He thought it would be better to have a Supreme Court, or a Supreme Judge, highly paid and supreme over a large area, rather than a number of comparatively poorly paid officials who were supreme in the particular area that was entrusted to them. What they wanted was, not many men, but a few very good men. He thought if one added up the total population and resources of the smaller islands, and then counted up the list of the officials required to administer them, he would come to the conclusion that the total official element was somewhat top-heavy. If that was so, it ought to be the object of the Government to see what could be done to make a beginning towards some federation, or, at any rate, of the smaller governments. It was true there were difficulties; but he did not think the difficulties, considering that some of the islands were so small, were any reason why they should not be more brought under the same Government than they were at the present time. Nor was the difficulty of distance of very great importance. The right hon. Gentleman dwelt on the difficulties of travelling, he ought rather to have dwelt on the delights of travelling among that group of islands. He could not imagine any place more delightful for yachting, apart from the season of the hurricanes. The travelling involved would not take an excessive time, and would certainly add to the delights of the post.

It would not be the desire of any section of the House that they should be harsh in imposing upon what were, after all, very old colonies anything which was really offensive to the sentiment of the colonies themselves; and he agreed especially that in the case of Barbados, which had got a very ancient Constitution and set great store upon the independence they enjoyed, they had to take account of the sentiment which was very deep in the feelings of the people. He was satisfied that increased economy and efficiency would be gained, at any rate, with respect to the Windward and Leeward Islands by some step towards federation. He agreed with the Colonial Secretary that it would be desirable to encourage as far as possible any tendency in the sentiments of those groups to draw together. He was sure he interpreted the speech of the Colonial Secretary correctly in saying that he, too, wished to encourage some step towards federation, and that the right hon. Gentleman's whole tone was not unsympathetic to the Motion. If that was so, he hoped the Colonial Secretary would lose no opportunity of encouraging that sentiment, and if he came before the House with any proposal towards the federation of some of the islands it would be received with every sympathy and approval by the House.

*Mr. **LAMONT** said he was quite satisfied with having made his Motion and with the interesting discussion to which it had given rise. He wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary for his sympathetic speech, and was glad to hear from his own lips that the policy of the Government was unification. He asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

*Sir **CHARLES DILKE** said that after what had been stated it would be very ungracious on his part to press his Amendment, and, therefore, he asked leave to withdraw it.

Amendment and Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

HEAVY MOTOR-CAR REGULATIONS.

Mr. **GARDNER** (Berkshire, Wokingham) said he wished to call attention to the Heavy Motor-Car Order, 1904, dated the 27th day of December; and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Heavy Motor-Car Order, dated the 27th day of December, 1904, permits traffic for which the large majority of the highways of the country are unfit, is likely to be oppressively burdensome in cost to the local authorities, and dangerous to foot passengers as well as all other users of the highways, and ought to be annulled." He said he remembered the patience with which many hon. Members sat for hours to get a Motor-Car Bill through. It was passed, although not altogether with the approval of the whole House, because it was believed that it would bring about an improvement in the then existing state of things. It was not to be wondered at that a clause like Clause 12 had passed through without observation as to what its real effect would be. He did not think that anyone had the least idea that it gave power to the Local Government Board to issue the regulations of which he complained.

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present—

The House was adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve of the clock till To-morrow.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 18th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Baker Street and Waterloo Railway; Edgware and Hampstead Railway; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway; Andover Lighting and Power.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

City of London Electric Lighting Company Bill [H.L.]; East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Charing Cross and Strand Electricity Supply Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bills; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

South Suburban Gas Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; University College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Seaham Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill; Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [H.L.]; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill. Reported, with an Amendment.

Corbett Estate Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a.

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Aylesbury Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Ealing Corporation Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Halifax Corporation Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Stockport Corporation Bill; Bristol Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed.

Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [H.L.]; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bills reported, with Amendments.

Morley Corporation Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 11th of April and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed for Thursday next.

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again till Monday next.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill (No. 77); Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill (No. 78). Brought from the Commons, and read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2ª and reported from the Committee.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3375. Zanzibar (Pemba).

No. 3376. Persia (Khorassan).

ARMY (MEDICAL DEPARTMENT).

Report for the year 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Two Orders in Council of May 10th, 1905, varying the establishment of the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses and the Commissioners of Irish Lights respectively.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Order in Council of May 10th, 1905, directing that the Extradition Acts, 1870 to 1895, shall apply to the case of Cuba.

PUBLIC RECORDS (OFFICE OF LAND REVENUE RECORDS AND ENROLMENTS).

Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA).

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905, No. 231. The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14) Warrant, 1905.

POLLING DISTRICTS.

(County of Northumberland). Order made by the County Council of the County of Northumberland, altering certain polling districts in the Wansbeck Parliamentary Division.

(West Riding of Yorkshire). Order made by the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire, altering certain polling districts in the Doncaster, Osgoldcross, Rotherham, and Sowerby Parliamentary Divisions.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petitions for early closing of; of inhabitants of Penrith (10); Young Men's Christian Association; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to extend Section 86 of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877. Was presented by the Lord Ashbourne; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next. (No. 75.)

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Judicature (Ireland) Acts, 1877 to 1897, and Section 6 of the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, and the law relating to bankrupts and to the constitution of certain election courts in Ireland. Was presented by the Lord Ashbourne; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next. (No. 76.)

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day read for adjourned debate on the Motion for the Second Reading.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE

BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, the House will remember that a few days ago my noble friend Lord Avebury moved the Second Reading of this Bill, but at the request of the noble Marquess the Leader of the House kindly consented to allow the debate to be adjourned until to-day. I hardly like to ask the noble Lord to again adjourn the debate, but if he can see his way to postpone it until Tuesday of next week I can assure him, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that we shall be very grateful.

LORD AVEBURY; My Lords, after the appeal which has been made to me by the noble Marquess I feel that it would be discourteous on my part were I to decline to meet his wishes. I therefore move, with the permission of the House, that the debate be adjourned till Tuesday next.

Moved, "That the debate on the Motion for the Second Reading be adjourned till Tuesday next."

On Question, Motion agreed to.

THE LOSS OF THE "BANFFSHIRE."

LORD MUSKERRY, who had given notice "To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have been made aware of the decision of the Board of Trade Inquiry which investigated the circumstances of the loss of the trawler 'Banffshire'; whether, previous to her leaving Aberdeen, she was inspected by a Board of Trade surveyor competent to survey her compasses and life-saving apparatus, and, if not, why not; also to call attention to the general question of the surveying of life-saving apparatus on British merchant ships," said that in the regrettable absence, through illness, of the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Trade he would postpone putting his Questions until Monday, May 29th.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 18th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

DUBLIN POLICE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 16th day of May, That, in the case of the following Bill, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Dublin Police Acts Amendment Bill.

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill; Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 16) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to Sheffield," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 224.]

Cork Junction Railways Bill. Ordered, That the evidence taken before the Committees on the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway (City of Dublin Junction Railways) Bill, 1884, the Cork and

Fermoy and Waterford and Wexford Railway Bill, 1890, the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill, 1898, the great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill, 1899, and the great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill, 1900, be referred to the Committee on the Cork Junction Railways Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of McConnell's Divorce Bill, together with the Documents deposited in the cases, be returned to the House of Lords.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).

Mr. TATTON EGERTON reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That the parties promoting the Cork Junction Railways Bill had stated that the evidence of Alderman Daniel Horgan, of Cork, and Captain L. Bertie Millington, R.E., of Cork, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Alderman Daniel Horgan and Captain L. Bertie Millington do attend the said Committee on Wednesday, 24th May, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Alderman Daniel Horgan and Captain L. Bertie Millington do attend the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills on Wednesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 7).

Mr. BOND reported from the Committee on Group No. 7 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Twelve of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

Petition from Salisbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE TO CROPS BILL.

Petition from Argyll, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS BILL.

Petition from Haverfordwest, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Perth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Argyll, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Salisbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MORTGAGE OF PREMISES BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Argyll, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF NORTHUMBERLAND).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Northumberland altering certain Polling Districts in the Wansbeck Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire altering certain Polling Districts in the Doncaster, Osgoldcross, Rotherham, and Sowerby Parliamentary Divisions [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords], and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158b]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of the 10th May, 1905, varying the Establishments of the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, respectively [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 10th May, 1905, directing that the Extradition Acts, 1870 to 1895, shall apply in the case of Cuba [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FLAX AND LINEN FACTORIES.

Address for "Return of the number of Flax and Linen Factories in the United Kingdom subject to inspection under The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, and the number of Spindles and Looms used in such Factories."—(*Mr. Wolff.*)

PARISH MEDICAL OFFICERS (SCOTLAND).

Return ordered, "showing for each Parish in Scotland as at the 1st day of December, 1902, the salaries and fees paid to outdoor Medical Officers under the Poor Law, Lunacy, and Vaccination Acts, and the arrangements made by the parish council for supplying medicines and medical appliances to poor persons."—(*Mr. Charles Douglas.*)

INCOME-TAX ASSESSMENTS.

Return ordered, "of the number of Assessments to the Income-Tax for the years ending the 5th day of April, 1902 and 1903 (in the same classes and in the same amounts as stated in and in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 314, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir George Bartley.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Courts of Equity—Persons Arrested and Detained for Unreasonable Periods while Waiting Trial.

MR. P. A. MCHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the judgment delivered by the Lord Chief Baron (Palles), on the 10th instant, in which he alluded to the lengths of time that persons arrested under attachments in Courts of equity were at present being detained in custody, and stated that this was not the case in the King's Bench Division where Crown rules particularly pointed out the course to be adopted, and that it was the duty of the plaintiff to see that the defendant was brought before the Court, and that the proper proceeding was taken for the purpose of having it determined what punishment he was to be subjected to; whether he can say if the other Divisions of the High Court have adopted these Crown rules; and, if not, will he take steps to see that like rules are adopted for dealing with cases of imprisonment for contempt of Court; whether there are any persons now imprisoned in Ireland for contempt of Court in which the plaintiff failed to have the defendant brought before the Court in the way condemned by the Lord Chief Baron; and, if so, will he take any action in such cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. My attention has been called to newspaper reports of the judgment referred to. I cannot, however, say whether they are accurate. The Lord Chief Baron, in referring to the Crown Office Rules of 1891, apparently omitted to call attention to the fact that, on June 30th, 1899, at the instance of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, a Circular was addressed to all Governors of Prisons requiring them, in the case of every prisoner committed for an indefinite period for contempt of Court, to send a report on the case within fourteen days of the prisoner's reception to the Lord Chancellor, through his secretary, and also to the Judge who made the order of committal; and to send a similar report to the same persons on every succeeding quarter day. This practice is similar to that which exists in England, and is followed by all the Divisions of the High Court in Ireland other than the King's Bench Division; and it has hitherto apparently given satisfaction. The matter is not one for the Executive, but rather for the Judges themselves to regulate. The attention of the Lord Chancellor will at once be called to the Lord Chief Baron's observations.

Transvaal Constitution—Franchise for British Indians.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in respect to the provision of constitutional changes in the Transvaal, whether his attention has been called to the fact that the undertaking in the terms of peace signed in 1902 that the question of granting the franchise to the natives would not be decided until after the introduction of self-government did not apply to the case of non-African coloured subjects of His Majesty, or bind the Government to withhold the franchise from British Indians possessing the requisite educational and property qualifications; and whether, in these circumstances, he will advise His Majesty to so amend the Letters Patent and Order in Council as to admit such British Indians to the franchise, in fulfilment of various official pledges, including that contained in Governor Viscount Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain, dated May 11th, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The reason why, as stated in my despatch of March 31st in [Cd. 2400], His Majesty's Government have been unable to make provision for the representation of any of His Majesty's coloured subjects is that they understand that the interpretation placed upon the pledge contained in the terms of peace by the burghers is that the question of granting the Parliamentary franchise to any coloured persons would not be decided until after the introduction of self-government. Having regard to this fact and to the importance of giving no ground for a charge of departing from the terms of peace, I am not prepared to advise His Majesty to amend the Letters Patent, and I am not aware that specific pledges on this point have been given either in the despatch quoted or otherwise.

British Railway Rates on Foreign and Colonial Farm Produce—Publication of Report of Committee.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is in a position to state when the Report will be issued of the Departmental Committee appointed in April, 1904, to inquire into the rates charged by railway companies in Great Britain in respect of foreign and colonial farm produce, and to report whether there is any evidence to show that preferential treatment is accorded to such produce; whether the evidence taken will be printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper; and, if so, will the evidence already taken be circulated at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) It is not possible, as yet, to state when this inquiry will be completed. Some difficulty has been experienced in obtaining evidence, and it is very desirable that the work of the Committee should not be brought to an end until the fullest opportunity has been given to those concerned to bring forward any complaints which they may have to make. The evidence will be printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper, but it would be undesirable that it should be presented except as a whole.

Piracy on the Chinese Coast.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been drawn to the prevalence of piracy in the Canton delta and along the coast of China; whether he has received during last year any account of organised attacks on British vessels; and what action the British Government is taking towards the suppression of these pirates.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The attention of His Majesty's Government has recently been called to a number of piratical attacks on vessels on the Canton River (some of them being British owned). His Majesty's Consul-General at Canton has made a representation to the Viceroy on the subject, and His Majesty's Government are in communication with His Majesty's Minister at Peking regarding these attacks.

Transfers of Telegraphists.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has decided to transfer a number of telegraphists from certain towns to offices in other districts; if so, whether he can state what monetary compensation he proposes to give to telegraphists who are to be compelled to leave the places in which they have resided for a number of years; and whether he will take steps that such transfers shall not interfere with the prospects of promotion and position on the seniority list of the telegraphists at the offices to which the transfers are sent.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) As the result of a general falling off in telegraph business throughout the country, the staff of telegraphists in some towns is more than sufficient for the work. The officers thus rendered redundant cannot be allowed to remain idle; and if they cannot be employed on postal work in the same office they must be transferred to some other office where work can be found for them. The interests of such officers are considered as far as possible, but I do not consider that any monetary compensation is due to them, since they are liable to employment wherever they are required; but they will be allowed to retain their seniority, and their actual and reasonable removal expenses will be paid. It is always the case that circumstances arising from the exigencies of the service may affect favourably or unfavourably the prospcets of the staff; and I do not consider that any special measures are necessary in the interests of the staff at the places to which the officers I have mentioned are transferred.

Transfer of Telegraphists—Retention of Seniority—Case at Croydon Post Office.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the rule of the postal service that officers transferred from one office to another do not carry their seniority with them, but are placed at the foot of their class, he will explain why a sorting clerk and telegraphist, having been removed from the Croydon office seven years ago at his own request, has been allowed to return and take his place above a number of his colleagues; whether he will state what steps he proposes to take to recompense the men for their loss of prospects; and whether it is intended that this action will form a precedent.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The officer to whom the hon. Member's Question is understood to refer had been promoted to another office from the class of sorting clerks and telegraphists at Croydon, and has recently been removed back to his former position by my direction. The case was dealt with on its merits, and I do not consider that the other members of the class have any good ground for complaint.

County Courts (No. 2) Bill—Date of Second Reading.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he can state when the County Courts (No. 2) Bill will be brought on for the Second Reading, and if he can hold out hopes of passing the measure this session.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) I am not yet in a position to name a day for the Second Reading of the County Courts (No. 2) Bill, and it would be premature for me to express any opinion on the question whether it will become law this session.

Vaccination Regulations.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the recently published opinions of Dr. S. Monckton Copeman, and of the Commissioners appointed by the *Lancet* in 1900 and 1902 to examine the various lymphs on sale in this country, support the view that large marks are not an evidence of efficient vaccination, and that small marks are not an evidence of inefficient vaccination; and that the same authorities have shown that, in consequence of the modern methods of vaccination, it is possible to produce the Board's stipulated area of vesiculation, viz., not less than half a square inch, without leaving anything like a corresponding area of marks; and whether he proposes to take any steps to amend the Board's Vaccination Order of 1898 so as to make it more consistent with the latest medical evidence on these points.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Dr. Copeman informs me that in his opinion large scars are not necessarily evidence of efficient vaccination, and small scars are not in themselves evidence of inefficient vaccination, but that usually the area of the scar corresponds fairly closely with that of the vesicle which preceded it. These opinions do not, as I am advised, render it necessary or desirable to amend the Vaccination Order, 1898, which does not make the area of the scar a criterion of successful vaccination.

Ventilation of House of Commons during Divisions.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he will consider the expediency of giving orders that, from the moment when a Question is put from the Chair for a second time and the challenge of a division is persisted in, the upper windows of the Chamber, on both sides, be opened and so kept open for at least ten minutes.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The capacity of the input and extract fans is more than sufficient to change the air rapidly, if run at full speed when the Chamber is cleared for an adjournment or division. The First Commissioner is quite willing that the windows shall be opened occasionally during the sitting, but he is unable to promise that this shall be done at each division.

Sale of Foreign Gold and Silver Watches in England in Contravention of the Law.

MR. ARTHUR STANLEY (Lancashire, Ormskirk): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to cases in which silver and gold watches imported from abroad have been sold in England in contravention of the law which prevents silver and gold wares being sold in this country unless hall-marked; and to cases in which watches imported from abroad have been sold in England in contravention of the law which forbids the sale in this country of silver and gold vessels or plate of less than a minimum fineness; and whether he will state what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the circumstances mentioned, and they have been in communication with the Commissioners of Customs and the Goldsmiths' Company on the subject. The Board are informed that the Goldsmiths' Company have commenced an action, which will raise the points referred to by the hon. Member.

Recommendations of the Industrial Alcohol Committee—Benefit to the West Indies.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, seeing that if the recommendations of the Industrial Alcohol Committee are carried out the relative positions of the home distiller, the colonial distiller, and the foreign distiller will remain unchanged, he will explain how the West Indies can derive substantial benefit, as a surtax will still be imposed equally on colonial and foreign spirit.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Distillers generally will derive substantial benefit from the encouragement that will be given to the consumption of alcohol for industrial purposes, and the West Indian distiller will have the opportunity of sharing in such benefit.

Yield of Foreign Cigarette Duty.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the additional duty of 1s. per pound on foreign cigarettes imposed last year has yielded to the revenue, and how far the yield corresponds with the estimated production of the tax.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The amount of revenue yielded by the additional duty of 1s. per pound on foreign cigarettes from the date of its imposition, 20th April, 1904, to the 31st March, 1905, was £14,651. The estimated yield of this additional duty was £20,000.

Athlone Workhouse Disinfecting Chamber —Loan by Local Government Board.

MR. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Irish Local Government Board now state that the disinfecting chamber erected in 1895 in the Athlone workhouse, under the system known as Dr. Scott's Patent Hot Air Disinfecting Chamber, and approved by the Board, is useless; and whether, seeing that the amount of the loan, £175, was then granted by the Board for this purpose, he will explain why the Board sanctioned the loan.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Board have not stated that this disinfecting chamber is useless, but in reply to the guardians' inquiry whether it was sufficient for the purpose of disinfecting the clothing of smallpox patients they stated that such a chamber is not to be depended upon, and that disinfection after smallpox requires special efficiency. The Board understand that disinfection by hot air is rapidly falling into disuse. Experience has shown that such disinfection is not as efficient as disinfection by steam, as the hot air does not penetrate the clothing so thoroughly as steam. When sanctioning a loan in

1895 the Board imposed no conditions upon the guardians as to the description of disinfector which they should obtain.

Delay in Erection of Labourer's Cottage for Michael Fisher, of Raphoe.

MR. McFADDEN (Donegal, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Michael Fisher, of Raphoe, county Donegal, applied to the Strabane No. 2 Rural District Council over six years ago to have a labourer's cottage erected for him under the Labourers Acts, and that the dwelling-house he then resided in was condemned as unfit or human habitation by Mr. Tully, Local Government Board inspector; and whether the Local Government Board will make inquiry as to what is the cause of delay on the part of the district council in providing the man with a cottage.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) As I explained in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 24th March†, the delay in this matter is not due to the Local Government Board. The Board are now addressing the district council on the subject.

Rejection of Applications for Erection of Labourers' Cottages by Ballymena Rural District Council.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the circumstances which led to the rejection of the applications for labourers' cottages presented by John Weir, William Casson, John Dewart, and Thomas Young to the Ballymena Rural District Council.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) A local inquiry was held in this matter, and the applications were rejected on the ground that there was no necessity for the cottages. The inspector found that there was an ample number of vacant suitable cottages, with gardens attached, to be had in the village of Ahoghill.

Amount spent by Congested Districts Board on Cuilmore, Kilfree, and Coolavin Divisions.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what amount has been expended by the Congested Districts Board on the scheduled electoral divisions of Cuilmore, Kilfree, and Coolavin, situate in Gurteen, county Sligo; since the Board was formed has any grant been recently called for by or given to these districts; can he give the terms on which the Congested Districts Board some time ago offered a sum for the erection of a bridge in Coolavin division; and will he say whether that was to be a free grant or one to be repaid by the ratepayers.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Board has not made any expenditure in the electoral divisions mentioned. On 29th July, 1903, in response to a resolution of the Sligo County Council, the Board offered to contribute, as a free grant, half the cost of a proposed bridge over the Cut, provided that such contribution should not exceed £400, and that steps should be taken to avail of the Board's offer within a year. The counties concerned do not appear to have since come to any agreement in the matter.

Blood Poisoning caused by Insanitary Condition of Cootehill Union Infirmary.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that cases of blood-poisoning occurred in the Cootehill Union Infirmary in January, 1904, alleged by the medical officer and inspector to be due to rotten floors and want of sanitary accommodation; and whether, seeing that an appeal has been made on behalf of the seven electoral divisions in the county for the necessary alterations to be made, and that Dr. Biggar was deputed by the Local Government Board to confer with the board of guardians, he can say what action, if any, has been taken in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Cases of septicæmia occurred in this workhouse in January, 1904. The medical officer was of opinion that the germs of the disease were in the floors and possibly in the walls. The Local Government Board's inspector inquired into the matter, and reported that it was difficult to find the direct and definite cause of the outbreak as there are several ways in which infection of the kind could be conveyed. He advised the guardians to make certain alterations, and thereupon they decided to obtain an estimate of the cost. No further action has, however, been taken by the guardians, but the new board will come into office next month, and the Local Government Board will urge them to take the matter in hand.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 1079.

Claremorris Estate.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that two clerks in the sub-sheriff's office, county Mayo, applied for parcels of the grazing land on the Claremorris Estate, recently purchased by the Estates Commissioners; that these men never held any land on the estate; that they are neither farmers nor the sons of farmers entitled to come in under the Land Act of 1903; that two bailiffs on the estate were induced by the clerk Soar to accept payment of one year's rent for an acre of land on each of their holdings, with a view to giving them some pretence of a claim for getting parcels of the grazing lands; and, if so, whether any steps will be taken to prosecute these men for attempting to get a grant of public money under false pretences.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Estates Commissioners have agreed to purchase the Claremorris Estate. Messrs. Good and Black, who, the Commissioners understand, are clerks in the office of the agent, have applied, as tenants on the estate, for parcels of the untenanted land. It is, however, alleged that they have recently got assignments of small holdings on the estate for the purpose of qualifying as such tenants. The question of allotting parcels to these gentlemen is under the consideration of the Commissioners, who will inquire into all the circumstances.

Gold Output of the Transvaal—Income-Tax paid on Profits.

Mr. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what was the amount of gold raised in the Transvaal, the amount distributed in dividends, the amount paid to the Government as income-tax on profits or otherwise by the gold mining companies of the Transvaal in each of the three years 1902, 1903, and 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The figures are given in the following table. The Gold Profit Tax Proclamation (see page 168 [Cd. 1163]), was passed in June, 1902, and the figures are for the Transvaal financial years running from 1st July to 30th June:—

	Gold raised.	Dividends paid.	Profit tax.	Other mining revenue.	
	£	£	£		£
1902–3	10,075,926	2,855,626	116,316	Prospecting Licences -	279,867
				Diggers' Licences -	45,205
				Mynpacht Dues - -	47,105
				Miscellaneous - -	18,223
1903–4	14,762,184	3,718,797	343,014	Prospecting Licences -	287,448
				Diggers' Licences -	37,348
				Mynpacht Dues - -	20,905
				Miscellaneous - -	32,041
Six months to 31st December, 1904.	8,298,435	Figures not received.	69,427	Licences and Miscellaneous Dues.	167,833

I should explain that, owing to the gold mining companies frequently making up their accounts in December, the greater part of the profit tax is paid early in the calendar year, and does not therefore come in the last six months. With regard to the payment of profit tax reference should be made to No. 2 in [Cd. 2102].

Transvaal Constitution—Exclusion of British Immigrants.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Constitution about to be granted to the Transvaal contains any safeguards against the exclusion of British emigrants by the colony in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I would refer my hon. friend to my reply to a similar Question by the hon. and learned Member for Dundee on the 4th instant,† in which I pointed out that any legislation relating to immigration would be subject to the power of disallowance belonging to the Crown.

Interchange of Students between British and Colonial Universities.

SIR JAMES RANKIN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, with a view to facilitate the interchange of students between the Universities in the United Kingdom and in the Colonies, he will take into his consideration the desirability of issuing from time to time a circular letter to the British Colonies, somewhat after the manner of the letter of 27th December, 1902, sent out by Lord Onslow, enclosing memoranda, from any of the Universities in the United Kingdom stating their rules and regulations for the reception of colonial students, and inviting the Colonies, on their part, to inform the Universities of the United Kingdom and the Colonial Office what rules and regulations are laid down by their Universities and technical schools for the reception of students from the Universities of the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The circular despatch of 27th December, 1902, was sent in consequence of a communication received from the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, followed by a conference between representatives of the University and the representatives of the Colonies. I shall always be glad to give all possible assistance in the direction indicated by my hon. friend to any University the authorities of which may express a desire for such action.

Canada and the Colonial Stock Acts.

SIR ALEXANDER HENDERSON (Staffordshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Provinces of Canada, which, along with all Colonies of the Crown, at present enjoy the benefits of the Colonial Stock Acts of 1877 and 1892, are alone deprived by Imperial legislation of the benefits of the Colonial Stock Act of 1900; and whether, with a view to the removal of such disability, His Majesty's Government would be prepared, on the motion of the Dominion of Canada, to take steps with a view to such amendment of the British North American Act as would confer upon the King in Council, as well as upon the Governor-General in Council, the right of disallowance of Bills assented to by the Lieutenant-Governors of the Provinces of Canada, whereby the Provinces of Canada might be enabled to enjoy the benefits of the Colonial Stock Act of 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have received no communication from the Canadian Government on this subject, and am not prepared to say what action His Majesty's Government might be prepared to take in the hypothetical case referred to by my hon. friend.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Mock Courts-Martial—Case on H.M.S. "Kent."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he has any statement to make with reference to the case of a midshipman on H.M.S. "Kent," who, having been sentenced by a mock Court-martial to be flogged, defended himself with a revolver; whether the commander of H.M.S. "Kent" or the other officers on board were aware of the treatment of this midshipman by his associates; and what steps were taken to protect him; who was the president of this mock Court-martial; and whether flogging with the flat of a dirk is the usual penalty inflicted by these mock Courts-martial; and whether the Admiralty authorities intend to take steps to put an end to such treatment on the King's ships.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 915.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): In September, 1903, it came to the knowledge of the Admiralty that in a ship in the Channel Fleet there was a practice of private punishment in the gun room. Orders were immediately issued that this system must be at once put down, and a circular letter was addressed to all commanders-in-chief forbidding such a practice, and desiring that commanding officers of His Majesty's ships might have their grave responsibility in the matter impressed upon them. For the intervening eighteen months no further case has come to the knowledge of the Admiralty. On the evening of the 2nd instant, however, a midshipman of the "Kent" who was about to receive a caning from the senior midshipman, fired a revolver at him. The Admiralty, on receiving the report of the Rear Admiral commanding the First Cruiser Squadron and that of the Court of Inquiry, decided at once to supersede the captain of the "Kent" and to place him on half pay; and the others concerned were suitably dealt with. A further circular letter has now been issued to the Fleet making it perfectly clear that the Admiralty are determined that this practice shall cease.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And what has become of the boy who saved himself from outrage by firing the revolver? I hope he is not to be punished.

MR. PRETYMAN: The boy has been withdrawn from the Navy by his parents.

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): In view of the great gravity of the question, will the hon. Gentleman appoint a Committee to inquire into the question of flogging in the Navy?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I shall bring this up later on.

Naval Cadetships.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty by whom are nominations to compete for cadetships with a view to obtaining commissions in the Royal Navy conferred; on what principle is the practice of nomination based; and why is not admission to the position of commissioned officer in the Royal Navy open to public competition instead of being closed to boys whose parents and friends cannot exert sufficient influence to procure nominations.

MR. PRETYMAN: Nominations of candidates for naval cadetships are made by the First Lord of the Admiralty, and to a limited extent by other members of the Board and certain naval officers holding high commands. The principle on which the practice is based, under the new system of entry, is fully described in the Papers presented to Parliament this year and last (Cd. 1962–04 and Cd. 2450–05), which show the care taken to ensure that the best boys are chosen and in the fairest possible way.

Premature Publication of Parliamentary Papers.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office on what date Paper (Cd. 2433), Return of Stores and Supplies destroyed locally, was sent to the printers; on what date was it published; and if he will explain why this Paper was published in the London papers three or four days before being available for Members of this House. It is a growing practice thus to ignore the Members of the House.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): This Paper was sent for printing on the 11th inst., and was circulated to the Vote Office on the 13th inst. The distribution to Members of Parliament and to the Press is not a matter with which the War Office is concerned, and I am not therefore in a position to reply to the rest of the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. FLYNN: How is it it was published in Saturday's papers and we did not get it till Tuesday?

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I cannot say.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): Then read *The Times.*

Royal Military College, Sandhurst, Examinations.

Mr. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the reason why boys who do not get a leaving certificate on leaving their public school, and who, having passed their preliminary examination for the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, fail in the further examination, should be required to again pass the preliminary or qualifying examination.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The question of the relative value of leaving and qualifying certificates is not at present definitely settled, but is under the consideration of the Army Council.

Militia Service Abroad.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Return relating to Militia Service Abroad during the South African War, of which notice stands upon to-day's Paper.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I am prepared to give a Return containing such information as is available. As regards the 4th and 5th Sections of the Return, there is no record containing the information required.

The Return referred to is as follows:—

Militia (Service outside United Kingdom), Address for Return showing—

(1) The number of Militia units and the number of officers and men serving in the Militia on the 1st day of January, 1900.

(2) The number of Militia units and the number of officers and men, excluding the Militia Reserve, who served outside the United Kingdom at any time between October, 1899, and June, 1902, distinguishing those who served (a) in South Africa; (b) at Mediterranean or other stations outside the United Kingdom.

(3) The number of Militia Reserve who served in South Africa.

(4) The number of Militia units which volunteered for service outside the United Kingdom during the South African War, but whose services were not accepted.

(5) The number of Militia units and the number of Militia officers and men who are known to have refused to volunteer for service outside the United Kingdom when asked to do so.

Unpaid Learners in the Post Office.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the number of unpaid learners employed in the postal service who have passed the Civil Service Competitive Examinations, together with their average service; whether he is aware that two learners at the Enniskillen office with fifteen months service have received no pay, and that youths in the Enniskillen district with four years service are still waiting appointments.

The POSTMASTER - GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I will make inquiry and communicate with the hon. Member.

The National Telephone Agreement.

Mr. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) asked if the Postmaster-General was prepared to accept his Amendment to the Motion regarding the National Telephone Agreement Committee with a view to enabling the Committee to inquire how far the interests of the National Telephone Company's employees were safeguarded.

Lord STANLEY: I have always said I wished these employees to have an opportunity of expressing their views before the Committee, and I was under the belief that the reference would enable that to be done, but as there appears to be some doubt on the subject, I have no hesitation in accepting the Amendment.

County Councils and Education Expenditure.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having in view Section 18 (1) (c) of the Education Act, 1902, when a county council has paid either the whole or a part of the expenses incurred by them in respect of capital expenditure or rent, on account of the provision or improvement of any public elementary school, out of the county rate, and has charged a half or three-quarters of such expenses incurred by them in respect of capital expenditure or rent upon the parish or parishes which in the opinion of the council are served by the school, it has been the practice of the Local Government Board auditor to allow such an arrangement.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): With one exception no case has been brought to my notice in which a district auditor has allowed as a charge on a parish under the enactment mentioned in the Question a portion of the expenses incurred in respect of the provision or improvement of a school, in so far as the cost of the work has been defrayed out of current rates and not out of a loan. In the case in which the auditor allowed the charge, he suggested in his report to the county council that the education committee should consider the matter carefully and endeavour to get a definite ruling upon the meaning of the section before making further charges of the description referred to. I may add that I am not aware that any doubt has been felt that the enactment applies to the rent of a school paid out of current rates.

Swine Fever in Ireland—Removal Orders.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is yet in a position to repeal the Swine Removal Order so far as Ireland is concerned; whether he is keeping in correspondence with the Irish Department as to the progress of the disease in Ireland; and when he hopes to be in a position to act in the matter.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): As I stated in reply to a Question by the hon. Member on the 13th April,† I cannot under existing circumstances hold out a hope of the relaxation of the Order at present. The reports we receive go to show that it is working smoothly and well, and it appears to afford the necessary protection against the introduction of disease into Great Britain with a minimum of loss and inconvenience to those concerned. The returns of the number of outbreaks of disease in Ireland are carefully examined by the Board week by week, but no further correspondence has been necessary.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in many districts no inspection at all is carried out?

*MR. AILWYN FELLOWES: I have not heard it.

MR. FLAVIN: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman it is so.

Light Railways.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he can state how many light railways have been authorised to be constructed under the Light Railways Act, how many have actually been constructed, what is the annual cost of the Light Railway Commission, and whether it is proposed to renew the Act or to allow it to terminate.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The length of lines authorised as light railways under the Light Railways Act up to the present date is 1,567 miles, and 429 miles have been constructed and opened for traffic. The cost of the Light Railway

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 68.

Commission in the financial year 1903–4 was £3,647, and from the commencement of the Act to the end of that year was £22,991. Some additional expense is incurred by the Board of Trade in dealing with Orders made and submitted to them. The total amount received in fees under the Act to the 31st March, 1904, was £22,750. Proposals for amending and continuing the Act are now before this House.

Law Officers' Fees.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what were the total fees paid to Mr. Attorney-General in respect of the Venezuelan Claims Arbitration and the British Guiana Arbitration, and to Mr. Solicitor-General in the cases Rex *v.* Osborn and others and Rex *v.* Hooley and Lawson; on whose advice were proceedings instituted in the two last-named cases, and where do the amounts for these and other Law Officers' fees appear on the Estimates.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): The total fees paid to the Attorney-General in the Venezuelan and British Guiana Arbitrations respectively were :—

		£	s.	d.
Venezuela, 1904–5		1,736	4	6
British Guiana	1903-4	2,124	0	0
	1904–5	714	12	0
		2,838	12	0

The total fees paid to the Solicitor-General in Rex *v.* Osborn and others and Rex *v.* Hooley and Lawson, respectively, were :—

	£	s.	d.
Rex *v.* Osborn and others	596	18	6
Rex *v.* Hooley and Lawson	1,033	19	3
Rex *v.* Lawson (Court for Crown Cases Reserved)	53	9	0
	1,087	8	3

These proceedings were instituted by the directions of the Attorney-General. The fees in the Venezuelan Arbitration were paid from the Foreign Office Vote for 1904–5, and the fees in the British Guiana Arbitration were paid from the Foreign Office Votes for 1903–4 and 1904–5. The fees paid to the Solicitor-General in Rex *v.* Osborn and others and Rex *v.* Hooley and Lawson were paid from the Vote for Law Charges, England. All fees paid to the Law Officers are shown in the Statement appended to the Appropriation Account for Law Charges.

Mr. WHITLEY: Do I understand that the Law Officers advise proceedings in the cases in which they subsequently draw fees?

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. WHITLEY: Then I take it the Answer is in the affirmative.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the total amounts of salary, fees, refreshers, and every other consideration paid out of the Treasury to Mr. Attorney-General and Mr. Solicitor-General during the two years ending May 15th, 1905.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The information desired by the hon. Member will be found up to March 31st last in the reply I gave on May 8th† to the hon. Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire. I fear that it is impractical to give details for broken periods of a year.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: But I have asked for information to May 15th.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: It is impossible to give that yet.

Government Parliamentary Agents.—Messrs. Bircham & Co.

Mr. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury the date and nature of the appointment of Mr. Bonner Maurice, of the firm of Messrs. Bircham and Co., Parliamentary Agents, and the amount of his emoluments for services rendered to the Government.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Mr. Bonner Maurice was appointed on

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 1112.

November 11th last as one of the Parliamentary Agents for the Government for the current session. The amount of his emoluments depends upon the work done during the session and cannot be stated at present.

Lake Erne.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the bed and soil of Lake Erne surrounding the town of Enniskillen are claimed to be the property of Lord Enniskillen, and are also claimed by the Commissioners of Woods (Dublin Office) to be the property of the Crown, and that the ownership has been the subject of correspondence for some time past between the parties; and whether, seeing that the Urban Council of Enniskillen is being retarded by this difference in carrying out a projected scheme of sanitation and roadway, he will state what decision, if any, has been arrived at between the claimants.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The matter is under investigation and a decision will be come to as soon as possible.

Liverpool Court of Passage.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether, in the event of the County Courts (No. 2) Bill becoming law and rules being framed under Section 6, extending the cases in which judgment may be entered up summarily against a defendant, he intends to grant similar powers by rule to the Liverpool Court of Passage, pursuant to the Liverpool Court of Passage Acts, 1893 and 1896, and the recommendations of the Borough Courts Committee.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): This is not a matter which rests with me. I have communicated in the proper quarter the views of the hon. Member, and I have no doubt they will receive every consideration.

Richmond Park Rabbits.

MR. SKEWES-COX (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he is aware that rabbits are being exterminated in Richmond Park by being entrapped by gins where they are sometimes kept in agony for hours suffering from mutilation; and whether he can take steps to effect the extermination of the rabbits in a more humane manner.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The rabbits are being trapped as being the most effective manner of reducing their excessive numbers. All trapping must inflict pain on the animal; every effort is made to reduce this to a minimum by frequent visits to the traps.

Higher Grade Secondary School Fees at Stockton-on-Tees.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his Department still adheres to its decision to compel the Stockton-on-Tees educational authority to increase the fees charged in the higher grade secondary school from 3d. per week to £3 per annum per scholar as a condition to continuing the Government grant; and whether, seeing that the educational authority has protested against this decision, which would practically debar the children of the working class from benefiting from the existence of this school, he will state under what authority the Department is seeking to compel a local education authority to increase the fees charged in the school which is supported from the rates.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): A special investigation is now being made into the conditions of the three secondary schools at Stockton-on-Tees. Until this is completed I am unable to give a specific Answer to the Question, but I will inform the hon. Member as soon as possible of the decision of the Board. The Board are not concerned with the requirement of a fee as such, but are bound to make such requirements as they consider necessary to secure the financial stability of the school before recognising it as eligible for grants.

Estates Commissioners—Enlargement of Holdings and Evicted Tenants.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether any farms or the interest in any freehold or fee-simple farms have been purchased so far by the Estates Commissioners for the purposes of enlarging holdings or finding equivalent houses for evicted tenants; and whether, in cases where no untenanted land is for sale or possible to obtain in a district, he will consider the advisability of extending the powers of the Estates Commissioners to enable them to buy in large grazing farms for this purpose.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I am not quite certain that I understand the Question. The Estates Commissioners have not any power to buy land from a person whose interest is less than that of a limited owner within the meaning of the Act. They have no power to purchase under the Land Purchase Acts the interests of tenants entitled to lesser interests. Where the owner purchases the tenant-right of his tenant, he can, of course, sell the farm as untenanted land to the Commissioners; and applications to purchase such lands have, I understand, been made or are about to be made to the Commissioners. I do not think any additional powers are required to carry out the policy of the Act.

Turf Rearing at Inny Junction.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the cost of the operations undertaken by the Board of Agriculture at Inny Junction for the rearing of turf; how much of the crop was sold; what sum was realised in respect of the sale; and whether it is proposed to continue the experiment this year.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The cost was about £1,150, exclusive of the cost of Departmental direction. No produce was sold, as there were no facilities for putting the turf on rail. The experiment is being continued this year, and a railway siding and loading bank are being constructed.

Education in Collooney District.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received copy of a resolution adopted recently at a meeting of clergy and laity held in Luawarry, Collooney, county Sligo, in reference to the educational wants of the district; and, if so, what action he proposes to take in regard to it.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have informed the hon. Member that if he will send me a copy of the resolution I will inquire into the matter.

Kilross Evicted Farm.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations have been in progress for six months between the Estates Commissioners and Count Moore for the purchase of the evicted farm of the late Mr. Matthew Mooney, at Kilross, near Tipperary; and that two inspections have been made; and if he will state whether the Commissioners have as yet completed the purchase; and, if not, what is the cause of the delay.

MR. WALTER LONG: The facts are as stated. The negotiations for purchase have not yet concluded owing to the owner's absence abroad.

MR. CULLINAN: I understand the agent has no authority to act. Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into that?

MR. WALTER LONG: I will bring the complaint of the hon. Member to the notice of the Commissioners.

Sir Edmund Hayes' Estate, County Donegal.

MR. McFADDEN (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the sale by Sir Edmund Hayes of his estate to his tenants in the county of Donegal, some nine or ten evicted tenants were restored by him to their holdings, and on their restoration signed agreements for purchase under the

Land Act of 1903; that the landlord's agent has been informed by the Estates Commissioners that the first half-year's interest on the purchase money will not be collected through the Land Commission; that the evicted tenants should not have been restored until the advances had been sanctioned; and that the agent may collect the interest in whatever manner he chooses; and whether, in view of the effect of this ruling of the Commissioners, if persisted in, upon the voluntary and immediate restoration by landlords of evicted tenants to their holdings for purposes of sale under the Land Act, instructions will be given to the Commissioners to withdraw this ruling.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Section 35 of the Act of 1896, which empowers the Land Commission to collect, from the tenant of a holding, interest in lieu of rent from the date of the agreement for the purchase of the holding up to the date of the advance, does not apply to the agreements for "parcels," and the Land Commission have no jurisdiction to collect or recover interest which may, by agreement between the vendor and the purchaser, be payable. There is nothing before the Land Commission to show that the persons referred to are in occupation of their plots, but even assuming that they are, the agreements for purchase of "parcels" only provide for collection of interest from the date of advance until the purchase annuity commences.

Irish Language in Irish Schools.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of schools examined in Irish as an extra during the period from 1st January, 1905, to 31st March, 1905, upon which the inspector of Irish and the ordinary inspector reported favourably; whether payment has been delayed in some cases; and, if so, what has been the cause of the delay; and when the fees will be paid.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The number was 259. Payment was delayed in some cases as a result of steps taken for the adoption of a uniform school year ending June 30th. The fees have now been paid in most cases, and the remainder are in process of payment.

Aughrim Parish Priest and the Police.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 2nd April Constable Fitzgerald, stationed at Aughrim, county Galway, used threatening and insulting language on the public road toward the Rev. Father Coghlan, priest of the parish; whether, in the interest of the peace of the district, he will have him removed to some other district; and whether it is the practice of the constabulary authorities to leave constables stationed in the parish where they have married a parishioner; and, if not, why has this constable been retained in Aughrim.

Mr. WALTER LONG: A complaint to the effect stated was received by the Inspector-General, who found, on inquiry, that on the date in question the rev. gentleman, when publicly reading a list of subscriptions received from his parishioners, announced that the constable had not subscribed. The constable, who asserts that he had subscribed £1, subsequently met the rev. gentleman and spoke to him on the subject; but he emphatically denies having used the language attributed to him. On the contrary, he complains of the clergyman's language towards him. The matter does not call for any interference on the part of the Government. The regulations provide that a constable shall not be stationed in a county in which he or his wife have relatives. That provision has not been contravened in this case, and it is not proposed to remove the constable.

Mr. ROCHE: As there is evidently a conflict of testimony will the right hon. Gentleman grant a sworn inquiry.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Certainly not, but if the hon. Member has any evidence he can furnish me with, I will look into it.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to take any action with regard to the language used by the priest?

[No Answer was returned.]

Malicious Injury Claims at Galway Quarter Sessions.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the list of malicious injury claims for which damages were awarded at Gort (county Galway) Quarter Sessions on 26th April last, which included one for cutting a boat adrift from her moorings, four for pulling down stone walls surrounding grazing farms, one for cutting the tails off cattle, and two for burning hay; whether he is aware that there were also a number of similar claims at the Quarter Sessions Courts at Ballinasloe, Portumna, Galway, and Tuam; and whether these outrages were of an agrarian nature, and what steps the Government is taking to deal with this class of crime in Galway.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; my attention has been directed to the number of cases in which claims for compensation were made at the recent quarter sessions in the county of Galway. Fifteen such claims were made, and compensation was awarded in each case. In two cases, however, appeals have been lodged. I may point out that there were no cases of cutting the tails off cattle, but that there were two cases in which the hair was removed from the tails. Of the fifteen outrages, eleven were of an agrarian character. A considerable force of additional police has been drafted into the county for the protection of the person and property of individuals, and a marked improvement in the condition of affairs has, I am glad to say, since manifested itself throughout the entire county.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: Have the police been able to bring anyone to justice?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I must ask for notice of that.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Were any of the constables in this district ever under the charge of ex-Sergeant Sheridan, who knows more about cattle maiming than anybody else?

[No Answer was returned.]

Malicious Injuries in County Galway.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a new wooden gate and 100 yards of new fencing were pulled down and destroyed on the farm of Patrick Costelloe, at Ballymacward, county Galway; and that on this farm 500 yards of stone wall were knocked down a few weeks ago, for which £50 was awarded as damages for malicious injury; and, if so, will he say what action he proposes to prevent the recurrence of similar damage.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; the facts are substantially as stated, save that the amount of compensation awarded was £34, not £50. The later of these offences was committed on the 4th of last month, and since that date a force of twenty extra police has been sent to the district concerned, namely, Athenry. Every effort has been made by me, and will continue to be made, to prevent the occurrence of outrage and to protect the property of individuals.

Land Purchase in County Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that negotiations for sale to the tenants were, some time since, almost brought to a conclusion on the estate of Mr. Adam Stafford Delmege, Garryspillane, Knocklong, county Limerick; that the tenants wanted that the untenanted lands on the estate should be sold through the Estates Commissioners to the labourers and tenants renting uneconomic holdings; and that a tenant, named Edmond Murphy, of Ballingarry, has been processed for rent due only six days because he refused to sign purchase agreements, although at the same time he owed only a half year's rent and the running gale; and will he take any steps to prevent further proceedings against Murphy.

Mr. WALTER LONG: An application for the sale of a portion of this estate has been received by the Commissioners, but no agreement for purchase has been lodged by Edmond Murphy, and no untenanted lands were comprised in the application. I have no information as to proceedings taken against Murphy, nor have I any power to intervene in any case of the exercise of legal rights by a landlord.

Portavogie Disaster.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to make any statement as to the possibility of a Government grant to assist the fishermen who are sufferers from the recent disaster at Portavogie.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction were asked by me to make special inquiry into the circumstances attending the disaster referred to, which had been brought before me by my hon. friend and by a deputation from the locality. Their report shows that there are some circumstances of an exceptional character, which enable a contribution to be made towards the expense of repairing the damaged boats without creating a precedent which would cause a larger demand than could properly be met by the limited funds available for all purposes of sea fisheries.

Land Commission Rules.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the codified rules of the Land Commission now in preparation will be issued.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The new code of rules is being prepared with all possible despatch, but the date of issue cannot yet be fixed.

Athenry Police Force.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the circumstances under which an extra force of constabulary has been drafted into the district of Athenry, county Galway.

Mr. REDDY: Has the hon. Member got his information from Lord Ashtown?

Mr. WALTER LONG: A system of boycotting and intimidation directed against the holders of grazing farms has been in existence for some time past in the Athenry and other districts of the county Galway. The reletting of grazing farms on the eleven months system usually takes place about May 1st, and on the approach of this date intimidation was exercised against these persons in order to compel them not to renew their grazing contracts. A number of outrages were also committed in furtherance of this movement, and, in the circumstances, it was considered necessary to augment the police force stationed in Athenry and other disturbed areas.

Irish Dried Milk Industry.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the new industry of dried milk started in Ireland about a year since; and whether, seeing that at present the rate for French dried milk from Louviers viâ Paris, Dieppe, and Newhaven to London is only 30s. per ton, while from Limerick to London it is 47s. 6d., he will consult with the English Board of Agriculture with the view to some remedy being applied to this disadvantage under which the Irish trade suffers.

Mr. WALTER LONG: A complaint has been made to the Department in this matter and is under investigation.

Delays in Delivery of Limerick Butter.

Mr. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will have inquiries made as to the cause of the delay in the delivery of a consignment of five cwts. of butter, sent from Limerick on May the 9th to John Thomas, Taffs Well, viâ Cardiff, and not delivered up to Saturday the 13th; and will he say what steps he intends to take to deal with such cases of railway neglect.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Department have received a complaint in this matter, and are inquiring into it.

Mr. JOYCE: I hope this inquiry will bear fruit. Personally I am sick of inquiries.

Irish Local Government Board Auditors.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many of the Local Government Board auditors in Ireland were previously accountants, or held or hold any certificate from the Institute of Chartered Accountants or any kindred body.

MR. WALTER LONG: As I informed the hon. Member on Tuesday last,† ten out of the seventeen auditors were accountants prior to appointment, in the sense that they had experience of public accounts. Only one, however, holds a certificate as accountant.

Constable Masterson, R.I.C.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if Constable Masterson, Royal Irish Constabulary, Mountmellick, who has been returned for trial to the next assizes in Queen's County on a charge of assault preferred against him by a man named Carroll, and which is alleged to have been committed at Somergrove, near Mountmellick, and who is at present at liberty under a rule of bail, is still discharging duty as a peace officer in Mountmellick.

MR. WALTER LONG: Constable Masterson has been suspended from duty since May 2nd.

Lord Dunraven's Croom Estate.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the Estates Commissioners have received any communication from the agent of Lord Dunraven with a view to a sale of the houses in the town of Croom, in the county of Limerick, to the town tenants; and whether, having regard to the fact that Lord Dunraven has arranged to sell the agricultural and pastoral part of the estate to the tenants thereof through the Estates Commissioners, and is willing to sell to the Croom town tenants the houses in their occupation, and also having regard to the fact that these tenants are anxious to buy same under The Land Act, 1903, at a price to be fixed by arbitration, the Estates Commissioners will take steps to purchase the same with a view to resale to these tenants.

MR. WALTER LONG: The application for sale in respect of this estate does not include the town of Croom, and the Commissioners cannot trace any correspondence with the agent on the subject. The question whether the Commissioners can, under the Land Purchase Acts, buy and resell to the tenants houses situate in towns, is one for the determination of the Commissioners, instructed by and subject to the review of Mr. Justice Meredith. I understand that a case in which this point is raised is at present before the learned Judge.

Kerry Evicted Tenant—Mr. Daniel Casey.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in rendering assistance to Mr. Daniel Casey, a reinstated evicted tenant on the Coltsmann Estate, county Kerry, about whose circumstances the Estates Commissioners are fully informed for over a year at least.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners are not yet in a position to sanction the advances for the sale of this estate, and in the meantime they are unable to make the grant recommended in the case of Daniel Casey. It is, however, anticipated that the advances will shortly be sanctioned.

Constable Reddy, R.I.C.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say what was the result of the recent investigation held at Mountmellick by order of the Inspector-General of Constabulary into the charge made against Constable Reddy of using offensive and insulting expressions towards respectable residents of the town; and whether, seeing that this policeman was obliged to make a public apology before the County Court Judge at Mountmellick within the past twelve months, in a case in which he was charged with assaulting and using insulting language towards a resident in the town (which offence was alleged to have been committed outside complainant's door), he proposes that the services of Constable Reddy should be retained in Mountmellick.

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† See page 484.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have received a report on this case, but have not yet had time to look into it. I would ask the hon. Member to kindly postpone the Question for a few days.

Irish Development Grant.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the Report of the Lord-Lieutenant on the Development Grant will be laid upon the Table.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Report for 1904–5 is now under consideration, and will be laid on the Table in the course of a few days.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to submit a revised Estimate of the Irish Development Grant.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: What is the cause of the delay in submitting it?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am afraid the reason is to be found in the necessity of examining the Estimates personally. I am dealing with each application as rapidly as I can.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman use his influence with the Prime Minister to give us a day for the discussion of the revised Estimate?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I will do my best to secure an adequate opportunity.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I do not mean an ordinary Irish Supply day, but a special day.

Cushendall Water Supply.

Mr. O'NEILL (Antrim, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what steps the Local Government Board of Ireland are taking, or intend to take, to enforce the carrying out of the sealed Order, dated May 15th, 1903, which ordered the Rural District Council of Ballycastle, in the county of Antrim, to provide a supply of wholesome water and proper sewerage for the village of Cushendall in their district, this Order having been made after an inquiry instituted by the Local Government Board, the result of which was a condemnation of the sanitary arrangements of Cushendall.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The delay in this case has been mainly due to proceedings in the superior Courts. A new Order was made on the 8th April last, and the district council are now preparing plans for the necessary works.

Galway Telegraph Office.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience caused to the public in Galway City by the want of an intermediate telegraph office, the present ones being at least one mile apart; and whether he will take steps to establish one in connection with the present sub-office in Dominick Street.

Lord STANLEY: My attention has not previously been called to this matter, but it was considered by one of my predecessors in 1902, and he came to the conclusion that a telegraph office was not warranted in Dominick Street as the total telegraph business of Galway was not large, and the head office was within half a mile. I regret that I am unable to take a different view.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: Is the noble Lord aware that the business has considerably developed since 1902?

Lord STANLEY: I do not think it has. I inquired into that, and still hold that my predecessor's decision was right.

Enniskillen Postal Arrangements.

Mr. JORDAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, some time ago, letters from Belleek, Pettigo, Kesh, and Irvinestown were delivered in Enniskillen about two o'clock in the afternoon, and that now letters from these towns are not delivered in Enniskillen till about 8.20 p.m., when business of the day is over; and will he state why the early delivery was abandoned; and whether he will arrange to have the letters delivered at the former time.

Lord STANLEY: It is the fact that until about a year ago mail bags were despatched to Enniskillen from the places referred to at about midday, but it was then found that so little use was made of the service by the public that the maintenance of the bags was not warranted. Instructions were therefore given for their discontinuance, and I regret that I am unable to restore them.

Mr. Roche and the Police.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary, in accordance with private notice, whether, having regard to the Answer he gave on Monday, based on the report of a county inspector of constabulary—an Answer impugning the veracity of a Member of the House—he will read aloud to the House the later report that he has received from the inspector, so as to give to it the same publicity as that given to the first statement.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I doubt whether it would be in order to read aloud an Answer which has already been printed and circulated with the Votes this morning. It would not be desirable to give Answers a second time in this way.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: The matter is of the gravest importance, as it involves the responsibility of the Chief Secretary for repeating false information supplied to him and impugning the veracity of an hon. Member. The question is not whether the right hon. Gentleman will read his printed Answer to the House, but whether he will read the report from the police which the right hon. Gentleman has now received, and which bears out in substance and almost in detail the statement of the hon. Member for East Galway. The right hon. Gentleman is asked to do so in order to give as much publicity to this second report as to the false statement to which, inadvertently, no doubt, he gave currency the other day.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I can only deal with this matter by the consent of the House. The case has been put in a somewhat unfair way as regards my Answer. I repudiate the suggestion that I have communicated false information to the House. I communicated the report I received from the police.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I made no personal accusation.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yesterday a Question was placed on the Paper by the hon. Member asking whether further information had been received. That Question was not asked, and I received no intimation that it was desired to postpone it. I had, therefore, no alternative but to follow the rules of the House and circulate my Answer with the Votes. I cannot now read again an Answer based entirely on the report of the county inspector, but I agree that, where the personal veracity of an hon. Member is concerned, it is desirable that the utmost publicity should be given to any statement on the subject. If the hon. Member will put a Question on the Paper, so that I may deal with it, I will take any opportunity within the rules of the House to see that the utmost publicity is given to my Answer.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I understand that the right hon. Gentleman will read the inspector's report?

Mr. WALTER LONG: There must be no misunderstanding. My business is to make a reply for which I am wholly responsible. I base that reply on the information which I receive from the members of the Executive Government; but it is within my discretion whether I read the reports that I receive or not.

Prime Minister's Speech on Imperial Defence.

Sir JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it can be arranged that an authorised report of his speech on 11th instant, as President of the Committee of Imperial Defence, shall be issued to Members of both Houses of Parliament, and of the Indian and Colonial Governments; and also circulated in all naval and military commands for purposes of general information.

The PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): If my hon. friend's suggestion is that the report of my speech should be made into a printed document and be published and circulated at the public expense, I think that would be a novel and not a good practice to set up. I believe that long custom authorises that procedure in the case of the financial statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but, on the whole, we should do well to confine our procedure to that case and not extend it If I am able to revise the speech I shall be glad to give a copy to any one who takes an interest in the subject.

Imperial Defence—Discussions in Parliament.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the expediency of proposing some method by which the House shall be put in possession of conclusions upon broad principles of policy, controlling expenditure and arrangements for Imperial defence, arrived at by the Committee of Imperial Defence, before and not after Vote A and Vote 1 of the Navy and Army Estimates are discussed in Committee of Supply.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I agree with my hon. friend in thinking that as far as this year is concerned there might have been a distinct convenience in having a discussion on item E of the Treasury Vote, but it was absolutely impossible to carry the arrangement out this year. Nor do I see how it can be carried out in another year without a drastic change in our procedure. I should rather deprecate having annual discussions on these large questions of Imperial defence and strategy. I deferred my statement as long as I could, but it was clear from the debates on the Votes for the Army and the Navy that it was necessary to make a statement this year.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the possibility, in case decisions of importance are arrived at by the Committee, of issuing to Parliament a statement of the broad conclusions by means of a Memorandum similar to the Memorandum issued on the Navy and Army Estimates.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that suggestion is well worth consideration.

The Unemployed Bill.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that arrangements have been made for 700 unemployed workmen in Leicester to begin a march to London on Sunday next, to demand work from the Government; and that arrangements are in progress for similar demonstrations from Glasgow, Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham; and whether, in view of the hardship which these men and their wives and children are enduring, he will take the Second Reading and the remaining stages of the Unemployed Bill on an early date so as to ensure that the measure shall become law this session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have heard of the report to which the hon. Member refers, but I am of opinion that the arrangements of this House in regard to its own business ought not to be modified in one way or the other by any external demonstrations.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Will the right hon. Gentleman reply to the last part of my Question—whether he will take the Second Reading and the remaining stages of the Unemployed Bill at an early date, so as to ensure its becoming law this session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not answer the last part of the Question because it seemed inseparably bound up with the first part, and I was unwilling that the House should suppose from my Answer that we ought in the smallest degree to be influenced by the facts of which the hon. Member has given an indication. But as he now puts a separate Question, I may assure him that I have every desire and expectation of seeing this Bill passed into law this session; and I should regard it as a great misfortune if it were not passed.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: Can the right hon. Gentleman fix a date for the Second Reading? In reference to the right hon. Gentleman's deprecation of these demonstrations, my statement was that it is only force that carries any measure through this House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I take exactly the opposite view to the hon. Gentleman. It is not force that carries measures through. I hope it is a reasoned, cautious public opinion; and, in my judgment, any such demonstration of force as he describes is inimical to the prospects of the Bill becoming law, and not favourable to them.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): Will the right hon. Gentleman exclude from his mind the consideration whether there are any demonstrations or not, and, realising the need for this Bill, will he give us a simple Answer to a Question asked in a law-abiding way? There is no more force about this than there was about the Brewers' Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not hear of the brewers marching up to London.

Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The brewers' demonstration was behind you.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that it was not I who introduced the subject of these demonstrations, but the hon. Member who put the Question, as he will find if he reads the Question. The hon. Member cannot ask me to say more than that it is my earnest hope and belief that the Bill will become law in the present session.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, seeing the grave evils which the introduction of this Bill has already brought about, he will consider the possibility of at once withdrawing it?

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: I will repeat this Question at an early date. Perhaps, as a personal explanation, I may be allowed to say that I am not advocating force. I am only pointing out that these men have grown desperate, and, seeing the indifference with which this measure is treated, have no resource but force.

Mr. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman see his way to make a recommendation to these unemployed poor people to withdraw their pennies from the bank of the hon. Baronet the Member for North Islington?

Militia Bill.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now state when the Second Reading of the Militia Bill will be taken.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot fix a day.

Local Government Board Vote.

Mr. ARTHUR STANLEY (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state on what day he will take the discussion in Supply on the Local Government Vote.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to give an absolute pledge, but I hope to be able to take this Vote this day fortnight.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: And Irish Supply is to be taken this day week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that is so.

Reorganisation of the Local Government Board.

Sir ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now state what progress has been made in the proposed reorganisation of the Local Government Board; and if he could indicate to the House the outline of the changes which he proposes should be made.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the Bill may be introduced without any very long delay. It is in an advanced state of preparation.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman state what the business will be next week after Monday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: At present I can only say I cannot flatter myself we shall complete the Budget Bill on Monday, and therefore we shall have to take it on Tuesday. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will ask at the rising of the House with regard to Wednesday.

DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 168.]

Minutes of the proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 168.]

Bill as amended (in Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 26th May, and to be printed. [Bill 225.]

SUPPLY [7TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham) said that, in view of the modest character of the Estimate this year, his remarks would be brief. The effective portion of the Vote, that which was allotted to actual works, showed a considerable decrease—£110,574. The only items which showed a substantial increase were under Naval barracks, General Fleet Services. This increase was mainly owing to the new quarters at Whale Island and the provision of depôts for submarine boats. There was also a small increase in the item for naval armaments, which was due to the provision of torpedo ranges at Hong-Kong and Malta. The other main increase was for grants in aid of works. This item was accounted for by the fact that the New South Wales Government had agreed to provide, free of cost, the storage accommodation required by the Navy for Victualling services in Australia; but it was not convenient to them to pay that sum at once; and as the Admiralty were very anxious that the work should be begun at once, they had agreed to advance the money in the first place, the whole of it being repaid in annual instalments spread over the next five years. With these exceptions, every item in the Vote showed a decrease as compared with the Estimates last year, and every effort had been made to reduce the expenditure on naval works to the lowest possible figure compatible with efficiency. The only other salient point which he wished to draw attention to was with regard to the administration of expenditure under the Loans Act. In agreement with a desire expressed by the Committee last year, arrangements were now being made to amalgamate the Works Department proper and the Works Loans Department, and by this means he hoped that an economy of about £20,000 a year would be effected.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he did not complain of the brevity of the remarks of the hon. Gentleman: indeed, he thought he would follow his example in that respect. Probably the most important thing in his statement was to be found in the concluding sentences, wherein he told them that the administration under the Naval Works Loan Act, and under the Naval Works were to be amalgamated. The original division of responsibility was the outcome of a well-considered scheme having economy for its object; and yet, although the works under the Loans Act had grown more extensive, a new policy had been introduced, and it had been suggested that it would be more economical to return to the old system, and to have the statutory works as well as the loan works under the same supervision.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: The change, in the first place, was not made on the ground of economy but from sheer necessity, because the Works Department of the day was small and not capable of dealing with great works. Now it has been gradually built up, and it has been possible, as well as compatible with economy, to reduce the two separate staffs and combine them into one.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON repeated his suggestion that economy was the ground put forward for the original change. He further desired to know when the next Naval Works Bill would be introduced into the House. It was about time, he thought, they got information. He forgot whether any statement had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer or anyone else as to the anticipated amount that would be asked for under the new Naval Works Bill, and he certainly hoped that they would get the information of the total estimated expenditure during the financial year just beginning. It was quite true that, apart from the increase in annuities and one or two other developments, there had been a decrease in the normal expenditure of the department amounting to £110,000. But he would like to know whether any portion of that reduction was attributable in any way to the new scheme of naval policy. He found that in the case of Jamaica there was a considerable item of £105,000 for a new official residence there. That was a large amount for a house, especially when they remembered that Jamaica was specifically mentioned in the last Memorandum as about to be reduced from its old *status*. Why, when the Admiralty were proposing to degrade Jamaica from its present *status* as a naval station, should they be asking for such an enormous sum for an official residence? He would like further to know whether the hon. Gentleman was prepared to make any statement in regard to what was being done or to be done at Rosyth?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): An undertaking has been given that the sum of £200,000 already voted shall not be exceeded.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was afraid he could not accept the hon. Member for King's Lynn as a conclusive authority, and he must press the Admiralty for an Answer to this Question. At any rate, could they confirm the hon. Member's statement?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that in the Report on the Appropriation Account it was specifically stated that the £200,000 was not to be exceeded.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said his hon. friend was quite mistaken. They were pledged, certainly, not to spend more than the £200,000 voted under the last Loans Bill during the existence of that Bill, but it was never supposed for one moment that they were going to create a naval base in Scotland for the total sum of £200,000. That sum, or the greater portion of it, had been spent mainly on the purchase of the site, and in due course, later in the session, when the Loan Bill of 1905 was introduced, he would lay before the House the full proposals of the Government for the development of the site, and ask the sanction of the House for the necessary expenditure.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he believed the amount paid for the site was £170,000, and he was glad to know that when the Naval Works Loan Bill was brought in they would hear a little more as to the intentions of the Admiralty. He accepted that as a pledge on the hon. Gentleman's part that they would have a careful estimate of the proposed expenditure on that new naval base. He hope that the Naval Works Bill would be produced as early as possible, and that they would be given as much information at the present time as could be given, so that they might get some intelligible idea as to the extent of the naval budget they were dealing with.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that certainly his memory was very distinct that the Report on the Appropriation Accounts and the Papers connected therewith contained an absolute pledge that no more money than the £200,000 already voted should be expended. It was his surprise at finding that which caused him to mention it that day. Now he understood he was entirely mistaken, and possibly the official through whom that assurance was conveyed was also mistaken. Were they to take it that the expenditure of that £200,000 was only to apply to the end of the present year, and, if so, were they to have some tremendous expenditure corresponding to that upon Gibraltar or some other first-class naval base? If that were so, he looked on it as a very serious matter. It was a serious adumbration of the intentions of the Admiralty in regard to that site. The hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty must be aware that it had been generally thought that Rosyth was to be abandoned. It was true that he had denied that statement within the last few days, but they were left for some time under the impression, conveyed through the ordinary channels of information—the Press—that an alteration had taken place in the policy of the Admiralty and that Rosyth was to be abandoned. Now they were told that it was not to be abandoned, and he supposed they were to have an expenditure of some millions incurred upon it. Of course, if the hon. Gentleman would say at once that it was only proposed to spend a small sum in addition to the £200,000, he would make no further remarks, but if the outlay was to amount to some millions, he assured him that the proposal would meet with his most uncompromising resistance, and he trusted he would be supported by hon. Members on both sides of the House in opposing the creation of a naval base which was unnecessary, which was strategically false and mischievous, and which would prove an enormous additional burden to that now placed upon the country by this monstrous system of Naval Loans Acts.

Now he came to the statement that the two administrative bodies were to be amalgamated — the Naval Works Loans and the administrative staff. He did not quite understand why that was not done before, and he confessed it aroused suspicion in his mind. Apparently the Naval Works Loans Department, instead of being temporary, was to be made permanent. He saw a very serious objection to that because it would saddle the country permanently with salaries which it had been anticipated they would get rid of when the loan works were completed, and it would also saddle the country with pensions. In the alternative, they would have to face this position, that the Admiralty engaged on permanent conditions, with the permanent advantages of permanent Civil servants, this staff, when they professedly were only to be engaged on work which in its nature was temporary, and was in due course to come to an end. If that were so, it indicated a determination on the part of the Admiralty to go on with Naval Works Loans Acts for an indefinite period. Surely some further explanation was required in regard to that. He would not go into the question of Jamaica. It was a very serious one, but it was only one among many questions of the same nature, Why, although the Admiralty were going to abandon that station, they were, nevertheless, incurring increasing expenditure in regard to it, was a thing which ought to be inquired into. Of course, it might be they were only fulfilling undertakings already entered into, but some further information was required. He wished to say, in conclusion, that the whole of this system of naval works by loan was a most monstrous and false system, and that in the case of Rosyth a tremendous blunder had been made. If the House was to be asked for a large sum in addition to the £200,000 already voted he certainly should most strongly oppose it.

Mr. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said he took some interest in the matter of Rosyth in the earlier stages, and he thought the House was now in possession of one of the most important intimations they had ever yet had in regard to naval works. He understood the Civil Lord of the Admiralty to promise the full proposals of the Government in regard to Rosyth when the Naval Works Bill came to be discussed.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: What I said was that I could make no statement about Rosyth, as regards the future, until the Naval Works Loans Bill was introduced, but that I would lay then whatever proposals the Government had in regard to it before the House.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said that exactly illustrated the position in which the House of Commons stood. He did not think his hearing was defective, but he certainly had understood the hon. Gentleman to promise them that when the Naval Works Bill was introduced he would give them the full proposals of the Government. Now they were told they were only to have such proposals as were in the mind of the Government, and there was some difference in that, because then they would only have the proposals up to a certain extent. The fact was that the Government at the present moment did not know what it was going to do with Rosyth as a naval base. It had entered on a large transaction, and it had bought property at a ridiculous and even at a scandalous price from the landed proprietor — it had paid eighty-five years purchase for that tract of land. He challenged that transaction at the time, and he still challenged i as a notable instance of how the Government had failed to use its Parliamentary powers for the acquisition of land, and had, in consequence, had to pay a much higher price than they ought to have done. He did not lay any blame on the landed proprietor, because having a soft Government to deal with he had extorted a very substantial price.

He would like to explain what was the local position in regard to Rosyth, and he wished to do it now in order that it might not be said when the Naval Works Loan Bill came forward that he had made any reservation in regard to the local interests involved. There were important local as well as national interests concerned. The county of Fife had furnished itself with a water supply, and the Government had become responsible for one-third of the cost of a not inconsiderable water scheme for supplying the population which was to be at this naval base. But he wanted to know where was that population, when was it to be there, would it be there within this decade or the next decade or even within the next generation? He believed that, unless they had another ridiculous outbreak of Jingoism in the country it would be postponed for at least half a century. That was the situation. The base had been projected, but the works which were to be established on it were now going to be postponed. The late Secretary to the Admiralty on one occasion spoke of Rosyth as an eventual base. He would like to know what was meant by that? It was not an eventual purchase of the site. They had not merely obtained the right to acquire the land and to hold it in reserve. The locality were led to believe there would be an increase of population, and the county and the locality arranged their business in view of present and future requirements. If the statement as to its being an eventual base had been made at the beginning the locality would not have formed the expectations as to the increase of the population which it had been led to form, and would not have made arrangements on the assumption that the Government meant prompt business. The fact was, the whole of this transaction was a sample of the way in which the Government went on. It was a spendthrift Government; it mismanaged its business; it started on a scheme and then found that it was not sufficiently urgent to be proceeded with.

He held a very strong opinion that the whole of this scheme of naval works was opposed to the general financial system of the country. When the Naval Works Bill came forward they would get nothing but vague words about eventualities, and the one fact would stand out that the land had been acquired by the Government at a rate only justifiable on the assumption of instant and urgent need.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said, as regarded the question of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, he thought the hon. Gentleman had overlooked the fact with regard to Rosyth that it was a total Vote of £200,000, and it was taken as a total Vote, because at that time no estimate either as to time or money could be given in respect of it, and what the House complained of then was the fact that the total proposal was made on the promise of something, the effect of which could not be foreseen. He entirely agreed with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Dundee as to the question of procedure in this House and the policy pursued with respect to loans for works. He thought if the Navy was to be sufficiently economically administered it must be on the basis of broad facts and broad principles, and his complaint was that they could not get from the Admiralty any clear statement of those principles by reason of the methods by which this House was approached for money. The whole thing was chopped up into little bits and they were never shown the whole account. He was sorry that they had a prospect of another demand being made for naval loans, following and not preceding the Naval Estimates, on this Works Vote. He did not think it was in the interest of the Navy or in the interests of the Admiralty. He had every confidence in the Admiralty himself, and had had for many years, and he believed they did work on broad principles, but they were open to the suspicion, and recent facts had increased the suspicion he had before, that they had taken action without due consideration with regard to this matter. The House, in his opinion, was placed in a very difficult position for discussing the Works Vote, because they had not the whole policy of the Admiralty before them.

To complete his observations upon the expenditure upon this matter, he might say that the Memorandum recently issued was an exposition of the world-wide policy which would have to be contemplated by this country, yet we were abolishing, or, rather, largely reducing, and in fact taking the ground that certain bases were not necessary. He did not wish to go over the whole of them, but let them take the case of Jamaica, which had been mentioned. The House would recollect that in the Memorandum dealing with this distribution of bases, the West Indian station was described as extending from the Equator to the Pole. That gave a very graphic description of the extent of the area, and they must remember that in that area the operations of commerce and trade which affected us were very great, and when they came to compare Rosyth on the one side with Jamaica on the other there was something incongruous in the position. The North Sea was not large when they considered the very small area of the German Ocean and all the waters to the eastward of England and to the westward of Europe as compared with the area between the Equator and the Pole. It was certainly incongruous when they were told the base at Jamaica was to be abolished because it was not wanted; that in these days of steam it was too near England; but that when they came to the German Ocean the contention of the Government was that Portsmouth was too far off, and that another base must be established within a few hours, steaming distance further north. He merely indicated that to establish his contention that our naval policy must be founded on broad principles, and based on a broad policy which had regard to the whole world and dealt with large areas. Therefore, this question could not be dealt with by the House unless the whole policy was before them.

He noticed in this Vote there was a charge for the fifteenth instalment in aid of a dock at Halifax. Now the arrangements had totally altered since the time when the last Estimate was placed before the House with regard to the relations of this country, and of the Admiralty, to Halifax. So far as the garrison there was concerned, the Imperial business of providing for its defence was to be taken over by the Dominion Government, and so far as the policy of the Admiralty was concerned, it was to reduce expenditure and to create a sort of *cadre*. What that meant he did not know, and therefore he thought the House was entitled to have a real explanation of the meaning that was put to this new word "*cadre*," because a dock was part of the appliances necessary for any sort of naval base. They were therefore entitled to press for information as to what exactly was going to happen under this system of *cadre*. What was going to happen to the machinery there? What was going to happen to the dock? Who was to be responsible for its upkeep? and who was to pay for it?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said this was no question of a dockyard. The dock was a private dock and the instalments were paid in order to secure, if necessary, the prior use of it.

SIR JOHN COLOMB said he was perfectly well aware of what his hon. friend stated, but whether it was a private dock or not, the fact of subsidising it was sufficient reason for seeing why that arrangement was made and they should have once and for all some explanation of the meaning of this new word *cadre* as applied to naval bases. Another point on which he desired some explicit information was the item of £88,000 for buildings on Whale Island for the accommodation of sub-lieutenants. Of late the policy of the Admiralty had been to get the officers and men more on the water, more often afloat, than used to be the case. Was it not the fact that our "nucleus of crews" system and our new rules with regard to the distribution of the Fleet as it affected the *personnel* had not had the effect of diminishing the numbers requiring barrack accommodation? and was it not the case that the Government had built close to Whale Island at immense cost a most luxurious barrack?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE was understood to assent.

SIR JOHN COLOMB said in that case he wanted to have it clearly proved that this expenditure on bricks and mortar on Whale Island was really necessary. He quite admitted that a great deal of time was lost by young officers having to go from the Naval College right through the dockyard to Whale Island, but he could not think that all this expenditure on bricks and mortar was necessary, and inasmuch as he had raised his voice against expenditure of this kind for many years, he must press for this explanation. What he wanted to know was whether the result of the system of nucleus crews and the new distribution of the *personnel* had not reduced the occupation of barracks, upon which £2,500,000 had recently been spent. It was not right that this question of naval works and buildings should be dealt with in a piecemeal fashion. The whole matter should be placed before the House and an opportunity afforded of fairly considering the principles of the policy upon which the Government were acting.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) thought the Committee had a right to complain of the perfunctory way in which this Vote had been introduced. No one would have imagined from the statement of the Civil Lord that a sum of £1,900,000 was involved. In 1899 the Vote amounted to only £730,000, so that in seven years it had increased nearly three-fold. The hon. Member would probably say that it was largely due to the annuities for the payment of advances, but that simply added force to the complaints which had been made against the policy of Naval and Military Works Bills. The Estimate for repayment had increased from £630,000 last year to over £1,000,000 this year, and that he took to be entirely due to expenditure already incurred and debt already created. If that were so, the indebtedness on account of naval works had been increased during the year by £5,000,000. This was borne out by the National Debt Return, which showed that the outstanding debt under Naval Works had grown from £11,000,000 in 1904 to £16,000,000. He submitted that it was not fair that expenditure of this amount should be made after the introduction of the Estimates for the year. The Committee was now considering the Naval Estimates, but they had not yet seen the Works Bill for the expenditure to be incurred during the present year. That was bad finance, as it did not give the House any idea as to the expenditure actually to be incurred. A further reason why the Naval Works Bill should be introduced before the Naval Estimates were passed was that it dealt not merely with new works but with the completion of works to which the House was already committed. The policy of dealing piecemeal with naval expenditure ought to come to an end, and the Committee ought to have a clear statement of the responsibilities to be incurred during the financial year before the financial year began.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES desired to revert to the statement he made earlier in the afternoon. He remarked then that the Admiralty had pledged themselves not to spend more than £200,000 on Rosyth, but the representative of the Admiralty denied it. He had now the document with him and would read the evidence of Colonel Raban and Major Pilkington given before the Public Accounts Committee in 1904, and the Treasury Minute thereon. The Committee asked—

> "In that way we are giving you more and more latitude, and the House of Commons is having less control."

To which the Admiralty witness replied—

> "At Rosyth you gave us authority to undertake work to the extent of £200,000, and no liability has been incurred beyond the £200,000. We have pledged ourselves that we shall not incur liabilities in excess of that, and the Treasury hold us to that. That is the obligation upon us."

The Treasury Minute, dated November 30th, 1904, dealing with this matter stated—

> "The Committee express the opinion that Parliament should not be asked on a token Vote of a few thousand pounds to commit itself to the construction of a new work of which the total cost may run into millions and of which not even an approximate estimate is submitted. My Lords, while entirely concurring with the principle of the Committee's observations, do not admit that in practice Parliament has been so committed. In connection, for example, with the token provision of £50,000 in the Naval Works Act of 1903 for Chatham Dockyard Extension, my Lords in Treasury Letter of June 25th last stated that they do not accept the contention that Parliament has sanctioned this service in principle, further than to provide the above-mentioned sum for preliminary work. Similarly with regard to Rosyth the Admiralty representative before the Committee stated: 'At Rosyth you gave us authority to undertake work to the extent of £200,000, and no liability has been incurred beyond the £200,000. We have pledged ourselves that we shall not incur liabilities in excess of that.'"

Did the Admiralty pledge themselves to that now?

MR. PRETYMAN: Certainly not without the especial authority of Parliament.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that when he stated that the Admiralty had pledged themselves that they would not incur liabilities beyond £200,000 it was denied, but he submitted that he had now made good his assertion. Of course if the Admiralty got further authority from Parliament they could incur expenditure of £100,000,000 or £1,000,000,000. The Public Accounts Committee, the Treasury, and the official superiors of the two representatives of the Admiralty on the Treasury Bench, had stated that Parliament was not to be considered as committed to a large expenditure on a mere token Vote of £200,000. To placate the Committee the Admiralty witnesses stated that they had not incurred, and would not incur, liabilities beyond the £200,000, and when the hon. Gentlemen below him came—if they dared to come—and asked for an expenditure of three, four, five, or six million pounds on Rosyth, he would call upon their official superiors and the Treasury to make good the pledge they had given with regard to the £200,000. His belief was that the difficulties which this House might interpose in the way of the execution of the lunatic scheme for a naval base at Rosyth would be as nothing compared with those that the Admiralty would meet with when they went to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was startled by the statement of the hon. Member for King's Lynn that the Admiralty had pledged themselves never to spend more than £200,000 at Rosyth.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I did not use the word "never."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that no Department could pledge themselves to incur liabilities beyond the amount sanctioned by Parliament. It was true that at the time of the purchase of the Chilian warships the Chancellor of the Exchequer committed an act of illegality behind the back of Parliament, and he had to come to Parliament for an indemnity. The language used by the Treasury and quoted by the hon. Member for King's Lynn was not quite of the same character as that now used by the Secretary to the Admiralty. This was an important financial question, and it now appeared to have become a Treasury matter. If the statement which had been read as to the Treasury policy in regard to this matter had any other meaning to that given by the Secretary to the Admiralty the House ought to know whether there was any other interpretation to be put upon it besides that which had been stated by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. This being a Treasury matter, and the Treasury having given a pledge to one of the Committees of the House, he appealed to the hon. Gentleman to let the representatives of the Treasury know in order that they might inform the House what their policy was.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that the statement read out by the hon. Member for King's Lynn was given by the witness in answer to a question. He did not think this was a point on which it was necessary for the Treasury to intervene, for there was nothing whatever behind the answer. It merely emphasised the fact that the Admiralty, with or without the Treasury authority, had no intention of doing anything which would put them during the currency of the present Loan Bill to any expenditure beyond the £200,000 authorised by Parliament.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said that the hon. Member for King's Lynn had not gone into the whole matter of these token Votes, because three such Votes had been taken. It was clear from the answer given before the Public Accounts Committee that the House was not committed to construct either the Rosyth or the Chatham docks. The Admiralty were bound not to exceed in two years £200,000 for Rosyth. As a matter of fact they had not exceeded that amount at Rosyth, but they had exceeded the amount voted in the two other token Votes. For the coastguard naval stations £50,000 was taken, but the Admiralty spent £89,000, and they had to go to the Treasury to permit them to exceed the £50,000, and the Treasury gave them permission. The Chatham Dock extension was an exact parallel to the Rosyth case, for they got permission to spend £50,000, but they actually incurred liabilities amounting to £70,000. The Admiralty again went to the Treasury, but this time the Treasury stood out against their demand. He wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury how he reconciled that with the statement contained in the Paper issued that morning with regard to the Chatham Dock extension. This form of finance was a very bad one, and they had often protested against it, and he hoped there would be an alteration in the mode of drawing up Loan Bills which had been adopted by the present Government.

He was disappointed with the meagre statement made by the Civil Lord in introducing this Vote. The fundamental objection they took to this method of procedure was that they had not really before them anything like the full proposals of the Government with regard to the naval works of the year. What was put before them was a mere fraction of the expenditure upon the naval works with which they were dealing. They were not only without details as to the sum to be taken, but also as to the actual amount to be taken. He suggested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should conform to the practice of his predecessors and tell them what amounts were wanted for military and naval works during the present year, so that they might know what were the obligations of the country in this respect. The Admiralty had not only departed from the system of making a full statement, but they had also adopted the practice of introducing their Bills later, when the House could not give them the consideration they deserved. This was a Vote which he should like to see largely increased in order that the country might be made aware of what was actually being spent. For the year ending March 31st this year they had spent £3,500,000 in naval works, and that made an expenditure during the year of £5,000,000 for naval works. Let them assume that the expenditure under this heading for the current year would be the same as in the past year. In that case if they really wanted to realise what the country was being called upon for naval works they would find that it was not £2,000,000 they were voting, but £5,500,000. Why should the Government conceal this matter from the consideration of the House? It was all due to the mischievous system of introducing this form of loan expenditure.

In many cases there was no distinction whatever between the character of the expenditure under the Loan Acts and the expenditure in the Navy Estimates. There were certain very large works for which there might be some justification in asking that they should be carried out by loan and repaid after a considerable period of years, but anyone who examined the Loans Act would find that there was expenditure of an identical character both under the Naval Estimates and under the Loans Act. The Admiralty asked for £40,000 or £50,000 in the Estimates for dredging, and he observed that last year they spent £120,000 for the same purpose under the Loans Act. Why should these two charges be separated? Why should not both be charged on the annual Votes? It had been stated that the charge in one case was in regard to the construction of a new dockyard, and that, therefore, the Admiralty were justified in charging the expenditure to the Loan Fund. That reason would not stand criticism for a moment in view of what should be the control of the House of Commons over the expenditure of the taxpayers' money for certain specific purposes. There were no hospitals on the Loan Fund. Why should they all be on the annual Votes and none on the Loan Fund? Barracks were sometimes on the Loan Fund and sometimes on the Votes. There was a certain amount of torpedo expenditure in the loan account and another amount in the Vote now before the Committee. Why should not the whole sum for these specific purposes be included in one item? For many years past there had been an item for coaling stations in various parts of the world, but there was none this time. He was naturally a little suspicious at the disappearance of that item. Did it mean that there was no longer to be any sum asked for coaling depôts at home and abroad? Did it mean that they policy of the Admiralty in this matter was to borrow the money in future? That would be a step in the wrong direction. He was beginning to hope that they were retracing their steps in the right direction.

The extravagance of which he complained tended to a confusion of the accounts and made it impossible for the House of Commons really to understand what was being taken out of the taxpayers' pockets for different specific purposes. It also introduced laxity of control. An item was introduced one year in the Votes, and the work to which the money was to be applied was not constructed, or only half constructed, and then the item disappeared from the Votes. The House of Commons did not notice these omissions from the Votes, but a year or two afterwards they found that the items had been transferred to the Loan Fund. Could anything be worse than that? He instanced the case of a store which was to be erected at the Cape at a cost of £2,000. It disappeared from the Estimates, and they afterwards learned from the Comptroller and Auditor-General that the charge was transferred to the Loan Fund. It was ridiculous that this rich country when erecting a trumpery store at a cost of £2,000 should not pay outright instead of spreading it over a number of years. When the Vote now before the Committee was under discussion a couple of years ago he pressed the then Secretary to the Admiralty for details of an item in regard to the purchase of land. The hon. Gentleman replied that it would be very inexpedient to give the information because it might spoil the market. He could not help agreeing with that contention. They now found that the Vote included, among other things, £4,000 for the purchase of a church and parsonage at Portsmouth. It might be very right and proper that there should be for the benefit of the seamen and others a church and parsonage, but he should like to ask why this charge was put on the Votes. In the Vote they were discussing to-day there were items for two churches, and the Committee had, therefore, an opportunity of expressing their opinion about them. It was originally proposed to pay for the church and parsonage at Portsmouth out of money included in the Estimates. He did not know for what reason the charge was taken out of the Votes and put on the Loan Fund. The church and parsonage at Portsmouth were now to be purchased for £5,000, and the payment of the money was to be spread over thirty years. The whole thing was to be charged to the extension of Portsmouth Dockyard. Was that a fair and honest way of treating the House of Commons? He thought the whole of this system ought to be done away with, and that they should return to the former practice of the House, which was to put the Naval Works expenditure on the Votes of the year. There were some signs that the Government were disposed to take steps in that direction. There were considerable sums for new works now included in the Votes which three or four years ago would have been put on the Loan Fund. This showed that the promise given by the Secretary to the Admiralty two years ago was beginning to bear some fruit. The promise was that in the Naval Loans Bill for the future no new works would be introduced. Here they had new works on the Vote for the year, and it seemed as if they were returning to a saner system for the future. He hoped there would be presented to the House at an early date the Naval Works Bill in order that they might be able to examine the details, and have an opportunity of considering them in all their bearings.

As to the dockyards at Jamaica, Halifax, and Esquimault, hon. Members would observe that the columns with regard to *personnel* in the Estimates were blank, but there was still to be a staff retained at Bermuda. The garrison at Bermuda was very largely reduced, and he thought the Committee should get from the Civil Lord a statement of what was proposed to be done there in future. What was the policy of the Government with regard to all these dockyards in future? From a statement made by the Secretary of the Treasury it appeared that the amount expended on naval works during the ten years ending March 31st, 1904, at Bermuda, Halifax, Jamaica, and Esquimault was £609,000. That was in addition to the military expenditure at these places, which was very great indeed. They were now told that after all this expenditure these bases were practically to be given up. There was no charge in the Vote for caretakers, and he wished to know how the buildings and works were to be kept in proper repair unless there was a staff to look after them.

Mr. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) said he wanted to know what the Admiralty were doing in regard to the erection of batteries in the Western Highlands for the training of the men of the Volunteer Naval Reserve. He understood that, notwithstanding previous promises, no progress had been made with them, although they had been started three years ago by the Admiralty. More than 600 Naval Reserve Volunteers had joined there and had no facilities for training in gunnery.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that the whole question of batteries for the Naval Reserves in the Western Highlands and elsewhere was now under consideration. The hon. Member for Dundee, speaking of the amalgamation of the Works Loan Department and the Works Department, was under a misapprehension. He said that the Works Loan Department was created for the purposes of economy. That was not so. It was created because the Works Department was not large enough to deal with all the great works which were contemplated under the Works Loans Acts, and it was necessary to relieve that department of a portion of this work. The new department created was only of a temporary nature to be maintained during the progress of the loan works. He was sure the hon. Gentleman would not object to a modification of that policy in the interests of economy, when the Works Department was sufficiently reinforced as to be able to take over the supervision of all these works.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Who is now Director of Works?

Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that the change had not yet come into effect, but the director was to be Colonel Raban. The present engineer-in-chief was Sir Henry Pilkington, and his department would be gradually reduced during the current year and finally closed by March 31st. The Director of Works would then have sole responsibility, and there would be a saving of about £20,000 on staff expenses. He was not disposed to quarrel with the hon. Member for Dundee when he said that it was an unfortunate thing that the entire expenditure for the year for naval works was not all shown under one head. On the other hand, neither he nor the present Government were responsible for introducing this system of Loan Bills. It was introduced by the Government of which the hon. Gentleman was a Member. He confessed he did not hold it up to admiration. It had been suggested that the Loan Bill for the next two years should have been introduced before this time. He was very anxious that it should be introduced as early as possible; but it was not for the Admiralty to settle the order of the business of the House. Moreover, a great many of the details had not yet been approved, but he hoped that it would be introduced at an early date. The hon. Member for Dundee asked whether the reduction on Vote 10 this year was in any way due to the new naval policy. Certainly it was. It was obvious that the mere closing of some of the naval stations abroad must effect a reduction in repairs and maintenance, and in the staff kept up at these ports.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I wanted to get an example.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that the closing of Halifax necessitated a reduction of the staff. It was said that if Jamaica was going to be given up as a station why was it that they were going on spending money there. They were under contract obligations in regard to particular buildings which were nearly finished; and he was sure the hon. Gentleman would admit that it would be the very worst policy to leave houses without a roof if they could be completed at a comparatively small expense, so that they could be disposed of in the open market or transferred to the Colonial Government. He was not able at that moment to indicate to the House anything with regard to the future expenditure on Rosyth. The hon. Member for King's Lynn talked of the stupendous expenditure on Rosyth and asked how was it that the rumours of the abandonment of that naval base had not been contradicted. Well, if the Admiralty were to spend their time in contradicting or verifying all the rumours that appeared in the papers in regard to naval policy, it would be difficult to proceed with their ordinary business. He asked the Committee to be patient. He could promise that when the Loans Bill was introduced the Admiralty would be in a position to give full information with regard to the expenditure on Rosyth. The hon. Member for King's Lynn said that the Works Department was not a big enough or strong enough body to deal with all these works. That department had been gradually built up until a sufficient number of officers had been trained to carry out the works under the Naval Loans Act. An increasing proportion of the works under loan had been carried out by the Works Department; and when the *personnel* of the Works Department was sufficiently strong to take over the whole, economy would be effected.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Are the appointments to the Loans Works Department temporary or permanent?

Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that in neither the Works Department nor the Works Loans Department were all the officers permanent. Many were taken on temporarily when work was pressing, and discharged when work was slack. He could not really gather what was the true attitude of the hon. and learned Member for Hawick Burghs in regard to Rosyth. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to be running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. He was outraged at the vast expenditure incurred in connection with Rosyth, and, on the other hand, he was outraged that his friends in Scotland were not receiving all the benefit they anticipated from the creation of a naval base in the waters of the Firth of Forth. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of an "eventual naval base" at Rosyth and condemned them because they had bought the land for it. That was surely a logical sequence of events. If a gentleman bought a site for a house he hoped he paid for it before he proceeded with his intention to build a house. He did not see that there was any ground for criticism of the Admiralty because they had purchased a site suitable for a naval base. His hon. and gallant friend the Member for Great Yarmouth had joined the chorus against the Loans Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that the schedule should be representative of the Estimate.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that he did not think that that was the practice of the hon. Member himself when in office.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that his Party was not allowed to remain in office long enough.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that his right hon. friend the Member for Great Yarmouth stated that there was no more necessity for Loans Bills. There was, however, a number of arrears to be disposed of, and then he hoped that the system of Loans Bills would be abandoned, and that all expenditure would be shown on the Estimates. As regarded the Halifax Dock, also mentioned by his right hon. friend, the Admiralty had the use of the dock without any responsibility for its upkeep and the maintenance of the machinery. That obviated the necessity of providing a separate dock. His right hon. friend also wished to know what the expenditure was.

SIR JOHN COLOMB said that his request for information was based on a broader principle.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that he thought it would be out of order to enter on the general question of naval policy.

SIR JOHN COLOMB said his point was the cost of repairs at Halifax.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that the arrangement was that the care and preservation of the buildings and of all the appliances should be undertaken by local authorities, either the Royal Engineers or the Colonial Works Department.

SIR JOHN COLOMB asked whether the cost would be voted by the House or borne by the Canadian Government.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that the repairing work would be carried out when possible by the Royal Engineers, and the charge would naturally fall on the Vote before the Committee. The charge had only been incurred from the 31st March last; and it was impossible to show the details at the present moment. He hoped, however, that the details would be shown in future years.

SIR JOHN COLOMB asked if the Royal Engineers were doing naval work.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that at the moment he was not able to answer that Question. His right hon. friend also objected to certain expenditure at Whale Island, but that was not incurred in connection with gunnery courses solely, but because the quarters were required for other courses.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked why £4,000 was spent before the work was authorised by the House.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said it was a special case. It was an emergency; and the expenditure was incurred with the full sanction of the Treasury.

MR. WHITLEY asked if the Treasury were informed that the total expenditure would be £45,000.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that the Treasury agreed to the whole expenditure. As regarded the argument of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh, they all recognised that expenditure should only be incurred with the full sanction of Parliament. Sufficient money had, however, been sanctioned for two years; and the Admiralty were accordingly in no way exceeding their powers. No new items had been included. A definite pledge had been given, not only by the representatives of the Admiralty, but by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that point. The hon. Member for Perthshire said that he wished the Vote would be increased. Such a remark was rarely heard from hon. Gentlemen opposite.

He, himself, agreed to the extent that he should be very glad to see the whole of the works expenditure shown and discussed together under the one head. With regard to the coaling depots which had been referred to, there was no mystery about their disappearance from the Estimates. Having been completed no further expenditure was required upon them; and they were, accordingly, removed from the Vote.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said, before going into the question which was the subject-matter of the discussion, he should like to ask whether the new buildings for the accommodation of the Explosives Committee were connected with the experiments that were being carried on by the Committee to discover a less erosive form of cordite powder. The erosive quality of the cordite was admitted, and they were told last year that experiments had been made and that already they had led to an improvement of the cordite powder. That was a statement of a rather speculative, but somewhat reassuring character, and there was naturally anxiety upon the point, because, although he should not be in order in alluding to the life of the 12-inch guns, every one knew that it was very short owing to the erosive quality of the cordite powder used.

He thought they were in a more hopeless and muddled position than they had ever been in before in regard to the conflict between the Works Vote and the Naval Works Bill. The confusion which had always existed had been increased by the sudden and complete change of policy on the part of the Government. His hon. friend the Member for Dundee was right in his contention as to the character of the first Loan Bill introduced by a Liberal Government. It was to be an annual Bill, and a Return was to be laid annually before Parliament. The items had a wholly different signification when they were supplied every year from that which they had when they were supplied every two years. The arrangement had, therefore, become hopelessly confused, and no one knew where they stood as between the Loan Acts and the Works Vote. The Civil Lord had admitted that he could not anticipate the statement that would be made later in the session on the introduction of the Loan Bill because the policy of the Government was not yet settled.

The fact that the policy of the Government was not yet settled affected the question of Rosyth. The charge against the Admiralty, in which the whole House joined, was that they paid a very high price for the land at Rosyth as an emergency measure for which no case could be made out. Difference of opinion came in when they came to consider the ultimate future of Rosyth. He admitted that in the ultimate future it would not be possible to rely on Portsmouth and the Solent, and even on Portland, as we had relied upon them in the past. We should have to look forward to removing some of our establishments from the Channel because of the rapidly increasing dangers to navigation in the Channel in time of war. But that was a case for deliberation and the discussion beforehand of all the considerations involved, and there was no case for a sudden purchase and the payment of an extravagant price. It was no secret that the Admiralty would have gone on with the Rosyth scheme some time ago if the Treasury had consented to it, but it was not a question for the Admiralty. The change of policy would involve great expenditure, and it was therefore a policy in regard to which the Treasury would have a preponderating voice. He was, therefore, convinced that in the Naval Works Bill the proposals in regard to Rosyth, although they might involve large ultimate expenditure, would not involve any large immediate expenditure. The confusion on this occasion was increased by the absence from that House of any member of the Cabinet who could give authoritive expression to the views of the Cabinet on these questions. If Lord Goschen were still in this House and had been First Lord of the Admiralty he would have given to the House an expression of opinion which would have satisfied the Committee, not perhaps that he was right, but that he understood what he was doing. They had not that expression this evening. That was not due to want of ability on the part of hon. Members on the Front Bench, but to the want of authority which they could not in their position command.

The confusion between the Works Vote and the Loans Bill was illustrated by the fact that the list of dockyards now before the House was inexplicable without reference to the other list. Why was Wei-hai-Wei counted as a dockyard? The whole range of these Votes would have to be considered, and they would have to start afresh on all this works expenditure. There was one item not in this Estimate at all, an item that he thought was very important to this Estimate. Jamaica was in but Bermuda was out. Why was it the name of Bermuda did not appear in the list? Was it the policy of the Government to abandon Bermuda? He did not know what the future of Bermuda was to be and what expenditure was justified. Owing to the position in which they were placed it was hopeless for them to obtain any real information in regard to this Vote. All they could do was to insist that the Admiralty should clear their minds as to their policy and should make a frank statement of their policy to the House. The Committee would expect that if they passed this Works Vote the Admiralty would come under an undertaking to make a statement, upon the introduction of the Works Bill, in the presence of representatives of the Cabinet and the Exchequer of the intended policy with regard to dockyards and naval stations abroad. The Committee were dealing with the matter in a piecemeal way which was unworthy of the House of Commons. They could not come to any proper conclusion on the present occasion, and if the Vote were passed to-day it would be on the understanding that, as on previous occasions, a statement would be made and an opportunity for a proper discussion afforded at a later period.

Mr. PRETYMAN said it would not be in order to enter upon the question of policy at any length; but, though he could not speak with authority on matters of policy, he thought he might say a few words to induce the Committee to pass the Vote. The policy in regard to naval stations might be shortly stated. We had stations in all parts of the world, acquired where possible to meet as far as they could be foreseen naval exigencies in naval operations, having regard to possible enemies and our own resources. When the bases at Jamaica, Halifax, Trincomalee, and Esquimalt were created, naval necessities in the opinion of the Cabinet and the Admiralty required under the then conditions that they should be maintained as bases that would probably be used in the event of war. They were therefore equipped for the repair of ships, and ships were kept at these stations and were available at all times. What had now happened was that, as a matter of policy in regard to preparation for instant war, they were not considered likely to form part of the field of operations and come into use upon a declaration of war, and therefore ships were no longer based upon these particular stations, though they visited them. When ships were not based there it was no longer necessary to keep up expenditure for equipment. Facilities were there with permanent structures and machinery, but if they were not for present use there was no object in spending money in maintenance, but they would be available if in any particular warlike operations it became necessary to use them as a temporary base. It had been seen during the present war that the Japanese and Russian fleets had used improvised temporary bases. If the requirements of the British Navy demanded the use of a station as a base, the plant would be there, and it would be equipped; but it was not suggested that immediately on the outbreak of any war, without consideration of requirements, we should immediately send out re-equipment. The right hon. Baronet's criticism would be justified if that were intended. It was not the intention. The Admiralty believed it would not be an economic policy to spend money on the maintenance of a base simply because we had it, if they did not believe it would be likely to be required for war.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said there were such questions as trade routes and food supplies to be considered, and the whole of the previous policy of the Admiralty was concerned, but these questions could not now be debated.

Mr. PRETYMAN said he was merely stating that, from the point of view he had taken, the right hon. Baronet's criticisms were justified. He was now endeavouring to state what the Admiralty policy was, not the grounds upon which it rested, to justify sanction to the Vote. Bermuda was retained as a naval base, but the number of ships based there would be less than formerly; and therefore the expenditure upon the Bermuda establishment was reduced in proportion to the use to be made of it. As to the purchase of Rosyth, with great respect for the opinion of the right hon. Baronet he found a difficulty in understanding what he meant when he objected to the sudden purchase.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he meant the element of suddenness as it appeared to have affected the price.

MR. PRETYMAN did not admit that it had.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE understood that the high price had been defended on the ground of the necessity for the sudden purchase.

MR. PRETYMAN said he had never put forward any such suggestion. The price was the best that could be obtained by private treaty, and information and experience at the disposal of the Government confirmed their view that resort to arbitration would not have been in the interests of economy. The purchase was made as part of a settled policy, and the Admiralty believed that a base at that particular point in the North Sea would have many advantages. He agreed with the right hon. Baronet as to the dangers of the narrow seas in time of war, but Rosyth would be more exempt from those dangers than Chatham.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: But the choice did not lie entirely between Chatham and Rosyth.

MR. PRETYMAN said that all these points were fully considered before the Admiralty came to a decision.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said the difficulty which many Members felt in agreeing to this Vote was not merely with regard to the distribution of the Fleet and the abandonment of certain coaling stations, but the absence of control on the part of Parliament over this Works Vote in connection with expenditure under Loans Acts. The control of Parliament was purely fictitious; there was no real control. They did not even know where certain branches of expenditure were to be found—whether they would be met out of yearly revenue or out of loans. A longer statement from the Civil Lord to the Admiralty would not put the matter altogether right. Parliament would not have any real control over the money spent under loans unless effect were given to the pious opinion of the Civil Lord in favour of having the entire works expenditure properly estimated and laid before Parliament, so that it could be considered as a whole. These Loans Acts could not be entirely dispensed with. If the works at Rosyth were proceeded with the expenditure would doubtless come under an Act of this kind. He was not urging the expenditure at Rosyth because it represented a certain advantage to Scotland; he believed that on the whole the Admiralty were taking a right course; but, if the works were continued, there would be a continuance of the hopeless confusion which now existed, and he regretted that there had been no member of the Cabinet present to observe the profound dissatisfaction which existed in the House with the present system of granting Supply to the Admiralty without any proper Parliamentary control over its expenditure. He believed that the best way of controlling expenditure would be by a Joint Committee of the Treasury and the House specially charged with the work. There ought to be a special Committee formed for that purpose. If they were satisfied that the country was getting value for its money, which he did not believe was so in all cases, these debates would be very much curtailed. He had always supported the Navy proposals of the Government, but he felt very much the responsibility of joining and acquiescing in the expenditure of these huge sums without adequate control. It was the fashion now to accuse Parliament of being extravagant, but, in regard to Votes like this, the Government were encouraging extravagance by not giving the House adequate means of securing efficiency and economy in the expenditure of the country. There was extravagance in not having modern machinery in some of the dockyards.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE : May I say that we are remedying that under this very loan expenditure?

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said that he joined in a vote against one of the churches in this Act not long ago because he thought that church was not needed, and because he thought the existing accommodation was adequate for the religious discipline of the troops. He thought also that the expenditure upon barracks had been extravagant. At any rate, he thought those who were responsible for this enormous expenditure when economy was so urgently required were not justified in agreeing to this system of presenting public accounts without entering a strong protest against it. In no country in the world did they find so unbusinesslike a control over finance as they did under this particular Vote. He thought if they had a strong Committee they would be able to evolve some sound system of finance.

MR. JOHN HOWARD (Kent, Faversham) said he desired to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty two Questions. In the first place had the Admiralty decided to remove the School of Gunnery from Sheerness to Chatham ; and, secondly, he wished to know when the Torpedo School to take its place was going to be started at Sheerness?

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said a twofold complaint had been made of the present system of the Admiralty, and the Civil Lord had given the Committee an assurance that the system complained of would not be repeated. He asked what hindered the introduction of the Naval Works Loan Bill at an earlier period of the session, and prevented the Bill being considered on previous occasions. There appeared to be some doubt in the mind of the Admiralty regarding their policy towards naval works. He hoped that the Government, having been squeezed by a landlord in Rosyth, would not now be bullied by their supporters into abandoning what was considered an advantageous policy, viz., the establishment of a naval base in the northern parts of these islands, and concentrating the base of the Fleet in these islands instead of its being scattered all over the world. He should not like it to go abroad that they objected to the general policy of establishing a naval base at Rosyth. Their objection to the policy of the Admiralty in this instance was, first, that they paid far too much money for the site, and secondly, that they bought the site far too early, and in advance of their requirements. The justification advanced by the Government for paying the high price of eighty-five years purchase was that there was a feuing value of the land. He had been there personally and investigated the matter, and he found that the total feuing value was to be measured by one year's purchase. The Government had paid two and a-half times as much as they would have paid had the matter gone to arbitration.

The hon. Member for Inverness had referred to Naval Reserve batteries and the Civil Lord had told them that the matter was under the consideration of the Admiralty. He hoped that before the debate was concluded they would have some indication from the Admiralty as to their policy with regard to the Naval Reserves. It was a branch of the service which it was very desirable to encourage. It enabled persons skilled in handling ships and in seafaring matters to train during the time they were not engaged in their occupations, so that they had in this system the best form of civilian contribution to the Navy. He hoped that the Admiralty would, in establishing Naval Reserve batteries in the future, follow the seafaring population. In one case the Admiralty had failed to do this, but it was to be desired that future batteries should be established in the centre of a seafaring and fishing population. He noticed that a sum of £6,000 was put down for dredging at Wei-hai-Wei. That expenditure was surely a little premature as matters at present stood in the Far East. He understood that our tenure there was somewhat precarious, and that when matters settled down at the end of the present war there would be room for considerable readjustment in the Eastern Seas. He hoped that some satisfactory reason would be forthcoming for this expenditure at Wei-hai-Wei, because he understood that the place had been practically abandoned for naval purposes. The hon. Member for Leith Burghs had referred to the item for churches on these Estimates. He hoped to have some assurance that these churches would not be allowed to go from the control of the Admiralty; and that they would be left free for occupation by any religious bodies that found it necessary to use them, and would not be set apart for the exclusive use of any one communion.

SIR JOHN COLOMB asked whether the Secretary to the Admiralty was prepared to give the Committee the items of the reductions due to the change of naval policy. The proposals in regard to Esquimault and Halifax disclosed to his mind most clearly that the Admiralty were shutting their eyes entirely to the development of sea war power in the United States. This disclosed a grave state of things. He thought the hon. Gentleman would find that the Admiralty were deliberately leaving out of contemplation the contingency that might arise owing to the fact that at present the increase of naval war power was going on in the United States and not in Europe.

MR. BENN (Devonport) said it seemed to him that they should not pass this Vote unless they had a little more information as to the policy of the Government with regard to shipbuilding. If there was to be a fundamental change of policy with regard to shipbuilding, that was to say, if the shipbuilding yards were to be turned into repairing shops, that change would affect the works for which they were asked to vote money at this moment.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I think that should come up on another Vote.

MR. BENN said one of the items in the present Vote had to do with the foundations for machines, and that was the very point to which he was directing the attention of the Committee. If the policy which was foreshadowed in Lord Selborne's Memorandum obtained, it must largely affect the money they were asked to vote with regard to these works. His concern arose out of the statement by Lord Selborne that the first business of the Royal dockyards was to keep the Fleet in repair, and that, accordingly, the amount of new work allotted to these dockyards should be subordinated to these matters. The Committee ought to know before they voted this money whether the policy of the Government was to maintain these yards as shipbuilding yards as heretofore.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Gentleman's remarks must come on another Vote.

MR. WHITLEY moved a reduction of £510, which was the amount proposed to be spent on Wei-hai-Wei. There was also on the Estimates an item of £6,000 for works to be carried out at that place. He thought it was time that this make-believe was put a stop to. Of course they all knew that Wei-hai-Wei had been an immense mistake. The Government had acknowledged it. It was at first intended, they were told, to be used as a great fortified station in the Far East, and it was to be a set-off against the taking of Port Arthur which the Government had allowed to go, but to which result they largely contributed by the withdrawal of the British ships then at Port Arthur. He did think it was time to remove all expenditure at Wei-hai-Wei from the Estimates. They had been told once or twice that this was to be used as a health resort in the Far East—a bathing establishment for officers or something of that kind. Of course they all knew what that meant. It was an easy way for the Government to let themselves down and to prevent them confessing the huge mistake they had made. Now they had practically given up this policy of bluff. Rosyth was practically the same thing. The Government went in for Rosyth in response to certain German newspapers which were making a great fuss. Now the Government had got over their fit of the blues and were going in for a more reasonable policy in naval matters. Therefore let them make a clean sheet and remove this kind of thing from the Estimates. The sum of £510 was not large, and it could not do much good. There was one man at Wei-hai-Wei at £1 per week. He did not know whether he was an Englishman or a Chinaman, or whether living was particularly cheap in that part of the British Empire, but it was very small remuneration. Why could not the Government have the courage to strike off the item and acknowledge that it was a great mistake to make such a flourish of trumpets. It was practically annexing a slice of China, and who knew how much that had to do in bringing about the Boxer trouble and the present war in the Far East as well. It was certainly lending a hand in the scramble that began for territory in China at that time. Now that they had abandoned their original policy there they ought to take the item off the Estimates.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries and Allowances of Superintending Officers and others) be reduced by £510."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry) said it could not be supposed that Wei-hai-Wei was a strength to the Empire. If it was, they must spend more money on it. There had been too much or too little spent on it during the time they had had it. He thought the Government might be congratulated on the fact that these Estimates were £1,000 less than the Secretary to the Admiralty in reply to a Question said they would be. What was the use of spending any money at all on this place? Nobody supposed that it could be made a really strong place by the expenditure of a few thousand pounds a year. The particular Vote which they were objecting to at the present moment was in regard to dredging, the amount to be spent being £6,000. He should like to know to what depth the dredging was to be undertaken and what advantage was to be gained by it. Was it for naval or commercial purposes? He understood that as a commercial port it was hopeless because there were no railways to it. If it was important as a great matter of policy to retain Wei-hai-Wei, then it would be necessary to spend millions, but to spend small items for which we got no return was a pure waste of money. He hoped the Committee by voting for the Amendment would protest against this frittering away of the public resources.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the hon. Member for Halifax had asked why the station at Wei-hai-Wei was maintained. The whole question of the policy with regard to Wei-hai-Wei had been fully debated in the House on many occasions. There had been a change of policy with regard to that place in one respect only. It was no longer to be maintained as a fortified naval base, but it was being maintained as a sanatorium for use by the Fleet on the China station. The hon. Member for Halifax made fun of that, but he would not make fun of it if he had ever lived on that station and realised the necessity for a healthy anchorage for the Fleet during the worst season of the year. It was a place also where exercises could be carried out on shore. The men went there for rifle practice. It had been of the greatest possible value to the health of the Fleet on that station, as had been shown by the reduction of the number of men on the sick list. No new works were going on there, but it was found desirable to maintain the dredging.

MR. BRIGHT: What depth is to be dredged?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: I cannot say the exact depth at the moment.

MR. BRIGHT: What advantage is to be derived from the dredging?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: There are cruisers and other ships which must have a sufficient depth of water.

MR. WHITLEY said there were several other items on the Votes for Wei-hai-Wei. Could the hon. Gentleman tell the Committee what was the total expenditure, capital and annual, for that place?

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said no one could deny for a moment the value of a health station for the Fleet in the Far East. There were two such stations in the Mediterranean on foreign territory, and we had a naval hospital in a third place, also foreign. Wei-hai-Wei was Chinese territory and was only acquired on lease so long as Port Arthur was occupied by Russia. At the time of its acquisition it was pointed out that Wei-hai-Wei was subject to torpedo attack and that it could not be made a war station but a peace station. Now, Port Arthur was not likely to be retained by Russia, and it seemed to him that Wei-hai-Wei should not be detained in our hands. It was totally unnecessary and should be returned to China. In his opinion, we ought to make arrangements with the Chinese Government to secure the use of it in time of peace as a health resort, the same as we did in regard to our Mediterranean stations in Turkish territory.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that the Government had now given up Wei-hai-Wei as a naval station and had kept it as a sanatorium. What had dredgers to do with a sanatorium? Moreover, for years past, large vessels had used Wei-hai-Wei, and dredging was therefore unnecessary. All the accommodation that was required there was for the men ashore. The only use to which Wei-hai-Wei could be put in any sense was as a port to which to bring invalids. Had the Government got to the bottom of their mind in regard to whether they were going to make of Wei-hai-Wei a Chinese Plymouth? The only purpose for which they required dredging was to give that perfect accommodation for large battleships which was required at a naval base. He was very glad indeed at the change in the policy in regard to Wei-hai-Wei as they understood it. He was only surprised that some one did not move a reduction in the Vote for Rosyth, for there they did not know fully the policy of the Government. But in regard to Wei-hai-Wei they knew what the Government policy was.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he could not quite understand why we should be dredging a sanatorium at Wei-hai-Wei, and some answer was necessary. Last year it was said that it had been decided to hold Wei-hai-Wei as a peace and health resort where the Fleet could go in hot weather; for exercise of the crews on shore; where 6,000 tons of coal could be kept; and where a hospital and canteen could be established. They could quite understand that. He believed that there was not the least difficulty in sending a battleship now into Wei-hai-Wei Harbour. The only difficulty was that the whole Fleet could not go in there and anchor; and perhaps that was the object of the dredging. Why this waste of money? Had the harbour silted up? and was this expenditure of £6,000 to be incurred every year on an unfortified base?

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that by arrangement with China it was agreed that we should give back Wei-hai-Wei to that country and only hold it as long as Russia held Port Arthur. They knew that, as the result of the war, Russia would not hold Port Arthur; and therefore the Government were wasting money in any expenditure on Wei-hai-Wei. He thought that before the Vote was taken the Committee ought to have some sort of explanation on that point.

Mr. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said there were several sub-heads "all over the place" about Wei-hai-Wei. Could the hon. Gentleman say what the annual and capital cost of this sanatorium would be?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he could not answer that Question because it would not be in order, as these other Votes were not under discussion. All he could say was that Wei-hai-Wei was being maintained as a sanatorium for the exercise of the men of the China Fleet when they were ashore, and for rifle practice. It was necessary to dredge the anchorage to accommodate the Fleet when it went into the harbour. If it was the policy of the Government at the conclusion of the war in the Far East to hand back Wei-hai-Wei to China, this expenditure would cease.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said that the Civil Lord of the Admiralty was wandering completely away from the subject. There was on the Vote a sum of £510 for a civil engineer at Wei-hai-Wei. The Civil Lord said that the Vote for Wei-hai-Wei was £6,000 for dredging, but why was there this £510 for a civil engineer? Was that civil engineer attached to the dredger, or was he attached to the sanatorium, or was he dredging baths for the sailors of the Fleet? The Committee was entitled to an explanation regarding this expenditure. He arrived at the House that day anxious to support the Government; but under the circumstances he could not vote for money which was thrown away on dredging at Wei-hai-Wei, although it was badly required elsewhere. It would be interesting to know what the civil engineer was engaged in out there.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that the hon. Member could not have heard his statement.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said it was because of the hon. Gentleman's statement that he intended to vote against the Government.

MR. BLACK said that the Committee should have more information as to why £6,000 was being spent on a dredger at Wei-hai-Wei which was apparently employing a hundred men.

MR. MOONEY said that evidently the Civil Lord to the Admiralty had no information with reference to the increase in the Vote. Surely further information was required.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 118; Noes, 202. (Division List No. 163.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt E C(S.Andrw'sBghs
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Parrott, William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)

Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.

White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr J. H. Whitley and Mr. Bright.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen,Augustus HenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour,Rt.Hn.GeraldW(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles,T.Gibson(King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C.R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Cross, Alexander, (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb.Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants,W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt HnAilwynEdward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn. Sir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst

Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, SirR.B.(Invern'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. EdwardAlgernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S(Warwick,S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, SirAugustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J.E(Elgin & Nairn
Gordon,Maj.Evans(T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Sir EW(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hamilton, Marq.of (L'nd'ndery
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, SirJames(Staffords.NW
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford,W.)
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard,John(Kent,Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James HenryCecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon, Hon.Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph(Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks.NR
Lee, Arthur H(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col.Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt. Hn. Walter(Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,Sir Lewis(EdinburghW.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, RtHnSirHE.(Wigt'n)
Maxwell,W J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morgan,DavidJ.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert

Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. W. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley,EdwardJas.(Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord(Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col.Sir C.EH(Sheffield
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn.SirWilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H.(Yorks.

Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hn. George
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER drew attention to a reduction on Item C., the item dealing with the official residences in Gibraltar. Originally it was, he said, intended to spend £10,500 on these official residences, but the officials having been done away with the official residences were not now required. £2,000 of the money had not been spent, but the hon. Gentleman in respect to this said the Admiralty could not leave these houses with their roofs off but would have to finish them before selling them off. Seeing that 82 per cent. of the money had been spent he was inclined to think it was not so much a matter of roofs as of decoration, which his experience told him it was better to leave undone until the houses were sold. He did not see what object would be gained by spending this money, and thought that this item should be struck off the Estimates, therefore he begged to move the reduction of the Vote, Item C., by £2,000.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £2,000."—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said there was nothing more to be said about this matter than had already been said, except that the Government were under contract obligations. They had entered into a contract which involved this money being spent on these houses, and he did not suppose the hon. Gentleman desired them to default.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that if that was so he would not press the reduction. He nevertheless considered it was a most improper way of arranging matters, and he thought the Government ought not to have placed themselves in the position of having to pay for work from which they could not possibly derive any benefit.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. WHITLEY said he had put a notice of Motion on the Paper to reduce Item D. by £550. This sum was asked for for the purpose of the cold-meat store at Gibraltar. The Committee was cognisant of the scandal in reference to this cold-meat store, the short history of which was that the Admiralty started out to build an ammunition store at an estimated cost of £20,000. When nearly completed they discovered that the building was in the first place well within the range of any enemy that might come along, and in the second it was too damp to store ammunition in. They then proceeded to turn it into a cold-meat store at a cost of £47,000. It was admitted by the Admiralty that it had been a mistake from beginning to end, and under the circumstances he moved that the item might be struck out of the Votes.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item D (Victualling Yards) be reduced by £550."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked whether the Secretary to the Admiralty did not propose to give some explanation with regard to this. He pointed out that a few days ago the House had had to listen to a lecture from the hon. Baronet the Member for Islington, who had told them that discussions in this House had no effect on the Estimates. He denied that that was the case. It was Votes such as those that they were discussing that the Committee ought to turn their attention to with the view of reducing that expenditure. The effect of the discussions in the House was felt by the officials who prepared these Estimates. It was more effectively felt under the old system before the new rules were brought into operation, but even now he had not the slightest doubt that the dread of exposure of carelessness or corruption of any kind which led to large sums of money being wasted in this way greatly affected the officials who prepared these Estimates. It was on these large Votes that the leakages took place and not upon the small and necessary increases such as they had discussed recently for the ventilation of the House. It was absurd to say that a small increase for ventilation or even the drainage of the House went to swell the Estimates. It was the Military and Naval Estimates that were to be blamed for these preventable increases, and it was an amazing thing to him that after the statement of the hon. Member for Halifax the officials of the Admiralty should make no attempt to give any explanation. It was well known that enormous waste took place under this Vote, because it was an inevitable law that when one spent borrowed money there was an infinitely greater amount of carelessness as to the obligations that were undertaken than would be the case if the works had to be paid for year by year according to what was done. That was the main argument of those who opposed this policy of Loan Bills when it was first introduced ten years previously. He thought hon. Members representing the Admiralty had no right to allow the Committee to go to a division without replying to such criticisms as those made by the hon. Member for Halifax.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he did not gather that the Deputy-Chairman had actually put the Question with regard to the specific matter under consideration.

Mr. DILLON said the Deputy-Chairman had actually put the Question and he rose to draw attention to the fact.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he did not understand so. This Vote had been on the Estimates for years and this discussion had taken place for several years. It was one of those matters carried out not by the Admiralty, but by the War Office under the dual system, and the Admiralty were not in possession of the details of the progress of the works, nor had the Admiralty any control over the progress of the work.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made the most extraordinary speech that had ever been made in this House by an Admiralty official. When the hon. Gentleman joined the Admiralty he thought he would be a credit to the Department, but if that was the only reply he could make to a serious criticism of this sort the sooner the hon. Gentleman resigned his position the better it would be. It was not fair that they should be referred to some other Department which was not before them at the present moment. It was a scandal for them to be told by the hon. Gentleman in that cavalier way that they had better wait for the War Office Vote. That was not treating the House in the way it ought to be treated. The hon. Gentleman did not appear competent to deal with these discussions, for when he was asked a very simple question about the depth of the dredging he replied that he thought it would be deep enough to take a battleship. Did the hon. Member know the draught required for a battleship? He generally tried to avoid making a personal attack and he was sorry if his warmth had carried him away on this occasion, but it excited his indignation to hear the hon Member stand up in the House and in that cavalier way say if they wanted to know that he would refer them to the Army Votes.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER thought the Admiralty ought to know something about the way this money had been spent. The hon. Member representing the Admiralty said they did not know anything about it, because the money had been spent by the War Office, but it was Admiralty money and it was the business of the Admiralty to know how the money had been spent. The representatives of the Admiralty ought to take more interest in questions which had been pressed upon them and they ought to control their own expenditure. The Admiralty were paying £32,000 of this sum and the War Office £26,000, and he wished to know why the Admiralty were paying the lion's share of this money. Apparently the Civil Lord was not aware of that, because he said they were paying half and half. They wanted this expenditure explained. There had been a great waste of Government money and they wished to know what reason there was for continuing this waste.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he did not think they ought to go to a division with only the statement they had had from the Civil Lord of the Admiralty. His experience in Parliament had been that a Minister got his Votes quicker if he gave the fullest information. The hon. Member must recognise, however, that the fullest information had not been given in reply to the Questions put to him. They blamed him for not having the representative of the War Office present to explain this expenditure. It was obviously a War Office question although it had not been explained how the whole matter had been arranged. A large portion of this money was for an ammunition store, and he wished to know who was officially responsible for the expenditure of this money in the first instance, which had been spent without any adequate result. It was admitted that a large amount of money had been spent by the Admiralty in a useless fashion, because what was once an ammunition store was going to be turned into a meat store. What was the explanation as to the War Office not being represented in order to give the information asked for.

MR. PRETYMAN said that this was really a War Office matter, and he thought it was a good principle that each Department should be responsible for its own acts. As he did not wish to make a second-hand explanation when they might have it first-hand he had sent for the Financial Secretary to the War Office and hoped that he would give the Committee an explanation of the point. But in any case they would have an opportunity of discussing the matter on the War Office Votes.

MR. DALZIEL said the Committee readily accepted the explanation of the hon. Gentleman, but in a matter of this kind he could not give a guarantee that it would be discussed on a future occasion. The odds were that this particular question would not be raised at all on the Army Estimates. The explanation was not satisfactory, and he hoped the representative of the War Office would arrive soon and give fuller information.

MR. DILLON said the Admiralty were paying their share of the cost of the work, and therefore the hon. Gentleman ought to have informed himself in regard to all the items in the Estimates so as to be able to explain to the House, on his own responsibility, the peculiar circumstances in connection with this Estimate. He thought it would be generally admitted that this system of works undertaken jointly by the War Office and the Admiralty with divided responsibility ought to be stopped. Nothing was more calculated to cause confusion and waste than to have work such as the Committee were now discussing under the joint control of these Departments. There was no real reason to render such joint responsibility necessary. He had taken the trouble to get the War Office Estimates, and the peculiarity of this Vote increased enormously when the Estimates of the two Departments were compared. In the Navy Estimates the total cost of this cold-meat store was put down at £47,300, a most astonishing figure for a cold-meat store, and in a note it was stated that the Admiralty's share was £32,000 and the War Department's share £26,000, making a total of £58,000. In the Army Estimates, on the other hand, the item was described as the conversion of the North Gorge magazine into a frozen-meat store, and the cost was given at £48,700, or £1,000 more than was entered in the Navy Vote. A note was added saying that half the cost would be borne by the Admiralty. That was totally at variance with the statement in the Navy Estimates.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said he did not anticipate that this question would be raised, otherwise he should have been there, and he would have informed himself more carefully than he had been able to do as to all the facts. He might remind the Committee that the corresponding figures would appear in the Army Estimates, and that there would be another opportunity of discussing the matter.

MR. DALZIEL: You cannot guarantee that.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he was not quite sure whether the complaint was that the original cost of the construction of this store was unnecessarily high or whether it was that the cost of its conversion was too high.

MR. DILLON said his point was that the cost, even if it were for the construction of the building, was extraordinary and required explanation; secondly, that if it were for its conversion it was preposterous; and, thirdly, that the figures of the two Estimates did not correspond.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said the word "conversion" was misleading. The expenditure was for the building of the whole work, and very costly work too. The building was originally intended for an ammunition store, but while the work was proceeding it was ascertained that the place was likely to be too damp for that purpose. and accordingly it was condemned. The building involved an immense amount of excavation and tunnelling, and everybody who knew anything about work of that kind knew that it was impossible to estimate the cost exactly. As a matter of fact it was found that there were fissures in the rocks which allowed water to come in and which involved a great deal of pumping; and there was a variety of other causes why the building cost a great deal more than was originally estimated. He agreed as to the undesirability of two Departments being responsible for one work, but in this case the only Department responsible was the War Office. The only way in which the Admiralty came into the matter was that, as they were to have a share in the use of the building, it was agreed that they should bear half the cost. As to the variation in the figures, there was no real disagreement between the two sets of Estimates. The total cost of the building was £47,800. [OPPOSITION cries of "£48,700."] Yes, but in the Navy Votes other figures were given, because other subsidiary services were included which, in the Army Estimates, were shown quite separately.

MR. DILLON said that the War Office estimate gave the sum as £48,700 for the conversion of the magazine, whereas the Navy Estimate gave it as £47,200 for the construction of the magazine.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I thought it was in the Estimates at £47,800; and I can see no variation.

MR. DILLON: How can the hon. Member say that?

[Here the hon. Member for East Mayo left his seat, walked down the gangway, crossed the floor, and laid before the hon. Member for Macclesfield the White paper.]

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he was extremely sorry not to be in a position to deal with this matter as he would like to do, but there would be another opportunity of doing so. He, however, assured the hon. Member that there was no variation in the figures whatever, except in respect of subsidiary services. The total amount of expenditure on this building would be divided equally between the two Departments. He did not contest that the building was very expensive, but it was of a character which it was impossible to judge of beforehand.

MR. DALZIEL said they were all glad of the intervention of the hon. Gentleman even at that late hour, but he was not at all satisfied with the explanation which he had given. He thought the Committee, before this Vote was allowed to pass, were entitled to information as to the War Office official who was responsible for the extraordinary blunder of recommending the building of a magazine on an unsuitable site. Who made the inquiry? Who sanctioned the expenditure? Explanation of every item which came before the Committee was shelved. He suggested that the Committee should adjourn until after the dinner hour to allow the hon. Gentleman to get information on this matter. The hon. Gentleman was very anxious that the War Office should have the full credit for this blunder; and he did not think the Civil Lord of the Admiralty was very anxious to divide the glory with him. On every side the Committee saw an enormous waste of money, and they had no information to justify this vast expenditure. The hon. Member for King's Lynn, who went out to Gibraltar as a special representative of the Government, might have had time to look into this matter. If so, would he give the Committee some guidance?

Mr. PRETYMAN said he quite appreciated the observations which had been made as to the enormous expenditure on this building; but, in palliation or justification of that expenditure, he desired to remind the Committee that the cold stores had been built on such a scale as to provide for the whole requirements of the garrison, both naval and military, in the event of the isolation of the fortress. Half the cost would be borne by the respective services.

Mr. GODDARD (Ipswich) said he thought they ought to have an assurance from the Admiralty, in view of what had already taken place, that the building, when completed, would be really suitable for the purpose for which it was now intended.

***Mr. BILL** (Staffordshire, Leek) said he had seen these stores, and could assure the Committee that it was the opinion of everybody connected with the Army and Navy at Gibraltar that stores better placed and better fitted for the purpose could not possibly have been devised. The stores were so situated that they were absolutely protected from any hostile Power. No better refrigerating stores could be possibly provided.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said he was glad to learn from the hon. Gentleman that the stores were so good. That was some consolation for all the money that was being spent on them. The Estimate which had been submitted was, however, admittedly wrong. It was now acknowledged to be obsolete and was by no means a clear statement. Apart from that, he wished to know who was responsible for recommending the place as suitable for a magazine.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Mr. Dalziel.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means from the remainder of this day's Sitting, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JEFFREYS, the Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [7th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) In the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Mr. WHITLEY said he rose to renew his Motion for the reduction of item D. by £550. He was afraid the explanation that had been given so far was not satisfactory, and did not in any way clear up the mystery of the cold-meat store, which was originally intended not for a cold-meat store but an ammunition store. This item had been on the Votes for some years and it had increased year by year. Originally it was £30,000, now it was £48,000, and they had no assurance that they had yet seen the end of this expenditure. He thought, under these circumstances, he was justified in taking the sense of the Committee with regard to the waste and extravagance which had taken place.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item D (Victualling Yards) be reduced by £550."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said this question interested him as a ratepayer. It appeared that the War Office thought they would like to make a store for ammunition, and they proceeded to spend a large sum of money in digging a hole in the Rock for that purpose. Then suddenly they discovered that the place was absolutely unfit for the purpose, and so, seeking for some excuse by means of which they could justify their expenditure, they said, "Let us turn it into a cold-meat store." And on the cold-meat store they spent more money. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Mayo that the amount of money spent upon it was an unheard of amount to spend for such a purpose, because one could spend any amount for a cold-meat store. The real question was whether it was necessary to turn this ammunition store into a cold-meat store. He thought hon. Gentlemen opposite were fairly justified in the stand they had taken. The question they raised was a fair question. He should like to know who suggested to the War Office that this place was suitable for an ammunition store, and who was responsible for the system of dual control, which he understood had been condemned by the Public Accounts Committee. He hoped the debate which had taken place would be the death blow to that system of control, for which neither was responsible but in regard to which both the Army and the Navy had to pay its quota towards the expenditure on any works that were undertaken. He could not see that any reasons had been given by the Secretary to the Admiralty for this cold-meat store, which was not finished and never would be. All the hon. Member had said was that he was not responsible for it and that he had no explanation to give. The Secretary to the War Office, who had been sent for in a hurry, also confessed that he knew nothing about it and could not explain it. The Gentlemen who represented Government Departments surely ought to know something about the Votes they had to defend.

Mr. MORRISON (Wiltshire, Wilton) said, so far as he could gather, what hon. Members objected to was that there should be a cold-meat store provided in Gibraltar, but if they had been to Gibraltar they would see that if there was one thing wanted more than another it was a cold-meat store. The men would not eat what was called hard rations; they objected to tinned meats and so forth, and it was very necessary that there should be some means of preserving fresh food.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said that hon. Gentlemen opposite had shown a legitimate interest in the Vote now before the House. Though undoubtedly it was a useful function for the House of Commons to criticise the Estimates, at the same time those who criticised ought to be prepared to show not only that there had been an error but the way in which that error might be remedied. It was very easy to criticise, but not quite so easy to carry out great works and undertakings such as the erection of this cold-meat store. If anyone was to blame for what had taken place it was the old system of dual control—a system which neither the Army nor the Navy was responsible for and which they could not repudiate. This matter had received the attention of the Public Accounts Committee, and the explanation was that, as usual, when one Department did work for the other the result was unsatisfactory. It would be well that each Department should provide for its own wants.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT agreed that was desirable, but there were occasions when work had to be done for both services. In this instance a cold store was required for joint naval and military use, and a joint committee which considered the question as to whether they should have an entirely new building or adapt a building originally intended for an ammunition store decided upon the latter, and did this in order to save the difference in expenditure between £55,000 and £40,000. The Estimate was exceeded, which was unfortunate, but not unusual in contracts of this kind, but still a considerable saving was effected. The discrepancy between the Army and Navy figures was explained by the latter Estimates having been submitted before the actual amount was ascertained. The sum was not excessive considering that the store was intended to serve for the whole Gibraltar garrison in the event of a siege of unknown duration, that it was bomb proof, and that unexpected difficulties were met with in rock excavations and water pumping.

Mr. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said he was grateful to hon. Members opposite for having given the Committee an opportunity for discussing this Vote. He was glad that for once they had found the military authorities and the naval authorities working in harmony, a thing which they did not find often in the past. In other days, when one service commenced a useless work and finally abandoned it, it was left to go to rack and ruin. Now they found that when a work was finished and found to be unsuitable for the purpose for which it was erected the heads of these great spending Departments formed a joint committee and endeavoured to turn the work to some use. The hon. Member for Wilton appeared to be the only Member who had seen this cold store, and in his opinion the expenditure on it had been justified. For his part, he thought the best way of dealing with this Vote was to adjourn it, and that the Admiralty should put a man-of-war at the service of the House in order that the House might inspect this work and judge for themselves. Knowing something of the cost of refrigerating machinery and of excavations for cold storage, he submitted that £48,000 was not an excessive price for the accommodation here provided. It was absolutely necessary that the naval and military forces should be supplied with fresh food, and if a vote were taken he should follow the lead of the hon. Member for the Leek Division who had actually seen the place.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) pointed out that there had been already voted for this work £47,300, and it was now proposed to add for machinery and rolling stock £8,900 and £1,800, making in all £58,000. But it had been stated that the building *de novo* would cost only £50,000; consequently he failed to understand why £58,000 was required. Another point that ought to be explained was why only £550 was expected to be spent during the whole of the financial year, seeing that in the financial year ended March 31st, 1904, no less than £20,700 was estimated to be spent. He agreed that cold storage was absolutely necessary at Gibraltar; the astonishing thing was that it had not been provided long since. Nothing was more calculated to keep the Government out of difficulties with contractors than that they should provide cold storage for themselves. According to a foot-note, the work was being carried out solely by the War Office, so that the dual control to which objection had been taken did not exist, and hon. Members ought to have withheld their criticisms until the War Office Votes were under discussion.

*Mr. BILL remarked that there had been a system of cold storage at Gibraltar for some time, but it had been confined to hulks in the bay, and consequently would have been altogether useless in time of war. Now that Gibraltar was the head-quarters of a great Imperial Fleet adequate cold storage was absolutely necessary, and if hon. Members had had an opportunity of visiting the place they would not criticise the present proposal.

Captain ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs) asked what had become of the ammunition store for which the Estimate was originally put down.

Mr. MOONEY said the only point the representative of the War Office had made clear was that the Estimate was altogether wrong and ought to be withdrawn. On the hon. Member's own showing there was a discrepancy of £1,400 between the Army Estimate and the Navy Estimate for the same work, but on neither of them did the moiety to be paid by the War Office amount to £26,000 as stated by the Army authorities. The Committee ought to be told upon what other Estimate that sum was based. The protests of the Opposition were directed not against the provision of cold storage at Gibraltar, but against the delay and the misleading Estimates. Who was the genius who informed the War Office that this site was the best possible for an ammunition store, overlooking the facts that tons of water came into it daily, and that it was within range of any fire that might be directed against it by an opposing force? The reasons which made the site unsuitable for an ammunition store had equal force in the matter of cold storage. The discussion had revealed a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. The Civil Lord had admitted that he knew nothing whatever about the details of the Vote he was asking the Committee to sanction, and the War Office representative whose assistance had been called in was equally ignorant in the matter.

Mr. DILLON said the discrepancy between the two Estimates was more serious than he had supposed, and it was nothing short of a public scandal that such figures should be placed before Parliament. The total cost was put down at £48,700, while the amount already voted was £38,500, and the estimated expenditure during the current financial year was £21,650, making a total of not £48,000, but £60,000. It should be noted, moreover, that this was merely for the "conversion."

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) thought the Committee ought to press for information as to what had become of the ammunition store.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN ruled that the Committee could not discuss the question of the ammunition store on this Vote.

Mr. DALZIEL asked whether the Government were going to treat the debate with silent contempt. For a long time the Committee were unable to get any information on the subject under discussion, and when at last they managed to secure his attendance the representative of the War Office was unable to give any satisfaction whatever. He had admitted that the money was voted in the first instance for an ammunition store, and that the site had been found to be unsuitable for the purpose. The Committee were entitled to know whether the expenditure was really necessary, and whether the official who advised the Government with regard to the ammunition store was still in the employment of the Department. He hoped they would have some further explanation of the figures placed before the Committee before the Estimate was passed. The representative of the War Office had just made a remarkable statement. He told them that by turning this ammunition store into a meat store they were making preparations in case there happened to be a siege of Gibraltar. [An Hon. Member: Why not?] He would tell the hon. Member opposite why not. The Prime Minister told them the other day that a siege of Gibraltar was absolutely impossible; therefore the opinion of the Financial Secretary to the War Office was opposed to that of the Prime Minister. He hoped the representative of the War Office would undertake that in future a full investigation should take place before such a heavy expenditure was incurred. He wished to have some assurance that in the future these Estimates would be put forward in a business-like way. This kind of dual responsibility for expenditure ought to be brought to an end, for it was a system which had been strongly condemned by the Public Accounts Committee, and why was it allowed to continue. Dual responsibility in these matters always meant the squandering of public money.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said in reply to the hon. Member for East Mayo that £48,700 was the total amount, and that expenditure was divided between the Army and the Navy.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked what was the total cost to the Admiralty of their share of this item. The work had been estimated wrongly, and he wished to know what the cost was going to be on the corrected Estimate.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE was understood to say that the amount would be £26,000.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that was £3,000 more than the Estimate, and he wished to know why that figure had not been put in the proper column.

Mr. MOONEY said that greater confusion had now been caused because another figure had been given. I said that half was to be paid by the Admiralty and half by the War Office, but if they multiplied that total by two it gave them £52,000, an amount which was not mentioned in the Estimate. He wished to know how those representing the Government made out that £26,000 was half of £48,000.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT explained that the figure referred to by the hon. Member contained certain subsidiary services as well, but £48,700 was the cost of providing this cold store.

MR. DALZIEL asked if the sum mentioned was all that would be required in connection with this mattter.

MR. BROMLEY DEVONPORT said he was not concerned with the Navy Estimates, but he knew that half of £48,000 would be contributed in all by the Admiralty partly last year, partly this year, and partly during the next four years. The total amount provided by the Admiralty would be £24,000.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he had not heard a whisper of explanation in regard to the Question he put as to the amount that would be required from the Admiralty to complete this work. Why had the amount not been put in the last column?

MR. PRETYMAN admitted that it was a complicated matter and most difficult to understand. It was due to the Estimate having been increased two or three times by one Department and having to be paid by two other Departments. It was an unfortunate system, but absolutely unavoidable. [OPPOSITION cries of "No!"] At any rate no hon. Member had suggested any other method of dealing with it. It was obvious that it would be cheaper to build one store than two, and better that it should be built by one Department than by two. If any hon. Member would suggest a better way than that he should be glad to hear of it. He hoped the Committee, having discussed the matter for more than two hours, would now agree to the Vote.

*MR. McCRAE said he did not think that the explanation given by the Secretary to the Admiralty was the right one. If he looked carefully at the figures he would find that that could not be the explanation. The difference in the Estimate according to the statement made by the Financial Secretary to the War Office was £1,500, but the difference pointed out by the hon. Member for Dundee was £1,350 for the Army share, and that, being only half, would bring it up to £2,700.

MR. PRETYMAN said the Civil Lord would have the matter fully gone into, and he would furnish an explanation in detail.

MR. DILLON, who was received with Ministerial cries of "Divide," said the hon. Members who desired to shout him down had conducted for an hour after 9 o'clock a sham debate in order to waste time. That kind of thing was absolutely intolerable. He did not agree that this system of dual control was unavoidable. Works of the kind under consideration should be constructed and paid for by either the Admiralty or the War Office, instead of by both. What did it matter to the taxpayer whether the War Office or the Admiralty paid the money. All they wanted was that the work should be properly controlled. To hear a Minister declare that it was impossible to do away with the system of dual control in a matter of this kind was absurd.

MR. SOARES said that as the Vote was entirely incorrect he desired to know if the Secretary to the Admiralty would place the whole of the facts before the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister, who was the President of the Imperial Defence Committee. Perhaps in future, if his suggestion were acted upon, they might have these matters conducted upon a more business-like basis.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 101, Noes, 151. Division List No. 164.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt. E C (S Andrw'sBghs.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, N E
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H)
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West
Johnson, John
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn C. R (Northants
Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthy'r
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Goddard and Mr. Mooney.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J (Manc'r.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Rt Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon, Hn. George T (Denbigh
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Laurie, Lieut-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham

Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles Liverpool
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (EdinburghW
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,W.J.H (Dumfriesshire
Montagu,Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.SirWilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WHITLEY moved that the Vote should be reduced by £15,000, which, he said, was part of a total sum already partly voted for a residence for the Commander-in-Chief at Chatham. There was an item of £7,000 on the Estimates last year in connection with this matter, and he took the opportunity of protesting then against the extravagant nature of this expenditure. An additional sum of £1,500 was now put down for furniture, and he supposed that £3,000 would probably be required altogether before the furnishing was completed, bringing the total cost of this residence up to £28,000. When the matter was under discussion last year they had the interesting admission from the right hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth that it was necessary to have a magnificent palace of this sort because it was desirable that the Commander-in-Chief should entertain society. He should have thought that an admiral could be better employed than in attending social functions. The providing of a smaller house for him would have been more satisfactory in saving the money of the taxpayers. He understood that there was already a good house for the Commander-in-Chief at Sheerness, and that, apart from its position, nothing better could be desired. It was because it had been decided to remove the official residence from Sheerness to Chatham that this large amount was asked for. He protested against the building of houses of this sort even for high officers. It meant that no man without a private income could undertake offices which implied entertaining and widespread hospitality. In the past the Navy more than the Army had been free from that kind of snobbery. He was sure nothing was more detrimental to efficiency than having high posts barred to men who had to live on their pay. In this case there was an allowance of £450 a year for servants in order to keep up the establishment. An admiral with a pay of £3,000 a year was not in a position to keep up a house of this sort.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Naval Barracks and General Fleet Services) be reduced by £15,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he wished to associate himself with the hon. Member for Halifax in protesting against the extravagance of building palaces for officers connected with the Navy. He thought the House scarcely realised the amount of money which was being spent in this way. Some of those who lived in houses of five or six rooms thought that a little more discretion might be exercised in regard to houses for officers of the Army and Navy. The sum of £25,000 which the house for the Commander-in-Chief was to cost was equal to the amount required to build 100 houses of six rooms each in a town in Lancashire. The amount now asked for furniture was out of all reason, and yet he believed that it would not be sufficient to furnish the house, and that another item would appear in the Vote next year for the same purpose. He wished the House and the country to know what they were paying for. How many rooms were there in the place, and what were they going to be used for? The hon. Member for Halifax had stated that the Commander-in-Chief could not, without a private income, maintain the position expected of him. He was afraid another result of this extravagant expenditure would be that the salary must be kept up in order that the Commander-in-Chief might be able to entertain and live in a style commensurate with the character of his dwelling-house. The Government were piling on expenses in this way, while the country was groaning under the unemployed and the terrible strain which the inhabitants of the large towns had to undergo in providing work for poor people. He thought the time had come when some economy should be practised. It was absolutely unnecessary that the country should spend anything like £25,000 on a house for any official.

Mr. MOONEY said it seemed to him that the Estimate they were now considering was one of extraordinary extravagance. At present the salary and allowances of the Commander-in-Chief amounted to £3,320. He would ask the Civil Lord whether he thought that a man in the position of an admiral, and with such an income, could keep up a house which was to cost £25,000, and, on account of his official position, do a certain amount of entertaining. He believed the Commander-in-Chief ought to have an official residence, but there was no reason why he should have a palace. He objected to the waste of money in building an extravagantly expensive establishment. There had been complaints as to the want of officers for the Army owing to the fact that they could not live on their pay. The Navy had not suffered from want of officers for the same reason, but if positions were to be created which could only be held by gentlemen having private means apart from official salary, that condition would sink downwards, and the Navy would come to be in the same position in that matter as the Army. What was the reason for removing the official residence from Sheerness to Chatham? Would £25,000 meet the total cost in connection with the residence, or would additional sums be required later on? Was the £25,000 for bricks and mortar, or did it include an extravagant price paid for the land on which the house was built?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE explained that the £25,000 represented not merely the estimate for building a residence for the Commander-in-Chief, but also large offices for the accommodation of his retinue and staff, offices in which the whole work of his office would be done. It was desirable that the Commander-in-Chief should be at the centre of his work rather than at Sheerness, twenty miles down the river. The furniture was not charged to this Vote. The reference to it was put here for information.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It does not appear anywhere else.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: In any case it does not appear in this Vote, and it would be out of order to discuss it now.

Mr. WHITLEY: What is to become of the Sheerness house?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE: I am not yet in a position to say, because it will be a year or a year and a-half before the new house is ready.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) hoped the working classes of the country would take note of the fact that £25,000 was being spent on the housing of an Admiralty official at a time when the Government could not afford a meal for poor half-fed children. He hoped that would sink deep into the hearts of working men, and that they would remember it at the ballot. It could be perfectly well seen that the Navy was run on class principles, the poor being robbed for the payment of highly-placed people.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE: The Commander-in-Chief pays for his own furniture.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: What is the £1,500 for?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE: For fixtures.

Mr. WHITLEY asked whether it was possible for the Commander-in-Chief to live in this house on the pay he received.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said it was considered a suitable size for the Commander-in-Chief with the salary provided for him.

Mr. SOARES asked how much was being spent on accommodation for the Commander-in-Chief, and how much on accommodation for the staff.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said the accommodation was all under one roof, and, although he could not apportion the cost, he could state that a large portion of the building consisted of offices for the accommodation of the staff.

Mr. MOONEY asked how much was paid for the land.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said nothing was paid for the land, because the house was built on Government land.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 95; Noes, 151. (Division List No. 165.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E.(Berwick)
Harwood, George
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kennedy, V. P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J
Parrott, William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Richards, Thomas (WMonm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer,Rt.Hn.C.R (Northants
Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Wallace, Robert
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, ArthurWalters(N.Dorset
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, SirJT.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr Shackleton and Mr. Henderson.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord

Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C B. (Hornsey)
Balfour,RtHn.GeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R.(Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W(Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain,RtHn. J.A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Rt.Hon.Sir John C.R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.SirJ(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, SirR.B.(Inv'rnessB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzgerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin &Nairn)
Gordon, Maj.Evans(T'rH'mlets
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,Sir EW (B'ry SEdm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords.N.W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kennaway, Rt.Hn.Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
Lawrence, Sir Joseph(Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, John Grant (YorksNR
Lee,Arthur H. (Hants,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter (Bristol,S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis(Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(EdinburghW
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,W.J.H (Dumfriesshire
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Morgan, DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C.B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £336,400, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he understood that they were to have a discussion on the discarded ships. It was rather late that night to enter upon such a discussion, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty would not take this Vote that night.

MR. PRETYMAN said he had no intention of taking the Vote that night, and he moved that Progress be reported.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL moved to reduce the Vote for the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty by £100, in order to raise the question of flogging and "ragging" in the Navy. Hon. Members who professed to be gentlemen ought to treat him with ordinary courtesy when he spoke on a question of humanity. Although this practice of flogging in the Navy had been suspended since 1884 by an order of the Admiralty, the Lords of the Admiralty could, by a stroke of the pen, revive it, and to-day in every King's ship, as part of the equipment, there was a cat-o'-nine-tails. Flogging had been abolished in the Army for twenty-five years, but youths in the Royal Navy under eighteen were subject, for the smallest and most trivial offence, after a summary trial, to castigation with twenty-four strokes by a birch which had been steamed over the coppers to make it hard. The strokes were administered on the bare flesh, in presence of all the other boys on board ship, and the youth was immediately afterwards removed to a cell below watermark and kept for twenty-four hours. These youths could be flogged because they could not swim properly, because their boots were not properly polished, because there was a speck of dirt on their clothes, or because their manner did not seem to be seemly to their superior officer. He had had letters from parents, from clergymen, and from deserters from the Navy on the subject; and he asked for a Commission or a Committee to investigate the whole subject. He insisted that it was intolerable that birching of that kind on the King's ships should be continued; and he appealed to the working men representatives in the House to help him in this matter, because they were returned by the fathers of the children who were the subjects of this degrading punishment. He could not help thinking that the new First Lord of the Admiralty could not better signalise his entrance into office than by abolishing the system of flogging in the Navy, as it had been abolished in the Army. Whenever Nelson had a particularly refractory sailor he sent him to Admiral Collingwood, who never flogged, and the sailors delighted in him.

The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty stated in answer to a Question in March last that birching was a better form of punishment for boys in the Navy than in the Army. He traversed that statement in the most distinct way. England was the only nation in the world that retained corporal punishment in the Navy. Boys of sixteen years of age were accepted in the French training ships and they were liable to corporal punishment in no shape or form. Even in the Russian Navy flogging had been abolished. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty had made a still more astonishing statement when he said that flogging in the Army had been abolished because there were no boys there. Had the hon. Gentleman ever seen a fife and drum band? The hon. Gentleman, who himself had been an officer in the Army, knew that there was no such thing as flogging in the Army, and he must recollect that in 1903 a colonel of the Guards had been placed on half pay for countenancing, or at least winking at, a case of "ragging" amongst the junior officers.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that the Vote under discussion referred to the Navy and not to the Army.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he had only referred to that case by way of illustration, and to show that the man who permitted "ragging" in the Army had been dismissed. If flogging in the Army had been abolished why, then, permit it in the Navy? He maintained that boys who had been subject to being bullied or flogged either had their spirit broken, or it trained them to exercise tyranny afterwards over those who might become subject to them. They had heard that day, in reply to a Question, what had occurred on board H.M.S. "Kent." There were twenty-five midshipmen on board that ship, and one of their number who had been condemned by a mock Court-martial to be flogged with the scabbard of a dirk, which was a well-known punishment in the gun room, declined to submit, and said that he would make it serious work if he was subjected to it. The middy was alone and surrounded by the gang of gentlemen who were bullying him, and he used his revolver on them and wounded one or two of his comrades. Why had there not been an investigation in that case? Were the Admiralty afraid, if the whole of the facts and circumstances of that revolt were brought to light, they would show that the boy's conduct in fighting against such a system was praiseworthy? What had become of that boy? They had been told that his parents had removed him. Had they removed him at the suggestion of the Admiralty or not? Did the commanders know that this system of cruelty in the gun room was practised? There was a speech of the Civil Lord which always went to his heart, in which the hon. Gentleman said that every boy carried in his kit an admiral's baton; but he knew it was perfectly certain that he also carried in his kit the possibility of a flogging with the cat-o'-nine-tails. The Navy, on which so much money was expended, was fenced around with class influence; and from the higher ranks the sons of the poor, no matter how able they might be, were absolutely excluded.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages, and Allowances) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said he wished to refer to the practice of mooring obsolete warships in the waters of the Clyde.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he would prefer to reply on the subject under discussion. It had been discussed at great length on a previous occasion, and there was no need for him to repeat the arguments he then used. The hon. Member had declaimed with ardour upon the possibility of flogging being inflicted upon men, but it was impossible that it could ever be revived.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why not repeal the Act?

*Mr. PRETYMAN said the hon. Member was aware that it would lead to a waste of Parliamentary time. As to the punishment of boys by birching—though corporal punishment was a thing to be avoided—there could be no doubt, and it was an opinion general in the Navy, that properly and judiciously inflicted, without undue severity, it was a great deal better than detention for growing boys. But it must be properly inflicted and must not be unduly frequent or be inflicted for offences which did not merit it. During the Easter recess he was on board the Irish training ship "Emerald" and asked an officer who had been on board the ship for a year how many of those birchings had been recently inflicted and he said there had not been one since he had been in the ship. He did not think the hon. Gentleman served his case by the extreme heat of his language and by his exaggeration. The hon. Member referred to cruelty and bullying. This was inconsistent with the fact that in no service in the world could there be found either in commission or in the ranks men more self-respecting and more respected than the officers and the men of the Royal Navy. His statement that there were no boys in the French Navy was correct, but with our system, where the *personnel* entered as boys, this particular form of punishment fell in. With regard to what went on in the gun room, there should be no sort of informal Court-martial or any severe unauthorised punishment upon midshipmen; and the Admiralty had taken the steps of which he had informed the House in order that any such practice should cease.

There was no justification for complaint as to entrance to the Navy. Every application for nomination received at the Admiralty was accepted in the first instance unless there was exceptional reason to the contrary. All the boys who had received these preliminary nominations were interviewed by an interview committee presided over by a naval officer of high rank. This committee was kept in absolute ignorance of any recommendations which might be made in favour of any boy. All they had before them was the statements of the parent and the schoolmaster or other person who had been entrusted with the boy's education. They interviewed the boys and classified them according to the opinion they formed of their brightness and fitness, and on that classification nominations were given. He thought it would be admitted that any possible objections there might be to the present system were enormously less than the obvious and serious objections there were to subjecting boys of twelve or thirteen years of age to the ordeal of a competitive examination. Under the present system there was no competitive examination whatever. There was only a qualifying and a medical examination, and every boy who passed them was qualified. There must always be a certain number of boys who failed to qualify, and therefore a few more nominations were given; but they were nominations on the selection and classification of a Committee who were absolutely guarded against any social influence whatever.

Mr. AINSWORTH said he desired to call attention to the danger attending the presence of obsolete warships in the Clyde. The present arrangement was objected to by all the yachting clubs in Glasgow.

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said that these ships were absolutely a danger to navigation, and he would urge the Secretary to the Admiralty to take the matter into consideration.

Mr. BENN said he feared that the Royal dockyards were being turned into mere repairing shops, and would urge the importance of keeping up the shipbuilding capacities of the dockyards. There was a possibility that under the guise of economy the dockyards were being starved. He wished to know whether the extreme number of discharges from the dockyards was attributable to a new policy. It was a very grave matter for his constituency.

Sir JOHN COLOMB asked whether it was the fact that the naval manœuvres had been cancelled for the present year.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said that it had been decided to withdraw the manœuvres, which were to have been world-wide. When they were arranged the active naval war that was now being fought was not foreseen.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington) stated that after the Committee on the Finance Bill, the first business taken would be the Naval Volunteers (Land) Bill and the Dogs Bill.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*) put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 19*th May*, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the Petition for additional provision in the following Bill:—Wellingborough and District Tramroads Electricity Supply [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—(Petition for additional provision). Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next.

Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Birmingham Corporation Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on May 11th discharged, and Bill committed.

Heckmondwike Improvement Bill. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill; Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill. Read 3^{a}, and passed.

Wrexham Gas Bill. Read 3^{a}, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Various Powers) Bill [H.L.]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit on Monday next till half-past Twelve o'clock.

Great Northern Railway Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 11th of May discharged, and Bill committed.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Minutes of evidence and proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited, returned from the Commons.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Arbroath Water Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons and read 1^{a}; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2^{a} (The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)), and reported from the Committee. (No. 79.)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill (No. 80); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill (No. 81); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill (No. 82). Brought from the Commons and read 1^{a}; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Ealing Corporation Bill; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Stockport Corporation Bill; Bristol Corporation Bill; Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill; Great Western

Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; London Gas Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.—D. Wellington, M. Winchester, E. Rosse, E. Gainsborough, L. Newton (chairman); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*) be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Ravensworth; read, and agreed to.

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Ridley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Yarborough; read, and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FEE FUND OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid on the Table the Annual Account of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords. The same was ordered to lie on the Table, and to be referred to the Select Committee on the House of Lords Offices.

POOR RELIEF (SCOTLAND).

Report to the Local Government Board for Scotland on the methods of administering poor relief in certain large town parishes of Scotland.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Reports, statistics, etc., on Continuation Classes (Scotland), 1903–1904.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, ESTATES COMMISSION.

Report of the Commissioners.

Appendix and minutes of evidence; with appendices and maps.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MEDWAY CONSERVANCY.

Statement of receipts and expenditure by the Conservators for the year ended March 25th, 1905. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petition for early closing of; of Reading and District Temperance Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 19*th May*, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have not been complied with, viz. :—Great Central Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time upon Monday next.

Highland Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill. As amended, considered; Clauses added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 6).

Mr. KEARLEY reported from the Committee on Group No. 6 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Sir HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That the parties opposing the London Building Acts (Amendment) Bill had stated that the evidence of Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Fox, Commanding Officer, London Salvage Corps, of 63, Watling Street, E.C., was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Fox do attend the said Committee on Tuesday next, at Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Fox do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills on Tuesday next, at Eleven of the clock.

BOOTLE CORPORATION BILL.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 83 relating to Private Bills, informed the House that, in his opinion, the Bootle Corporation Bill, though unopposed, ought to be treated as an opposed Bill.

PETITIONS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).

Petition of E. C. Wolstenholme Elmy, and others, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from King's Lynn, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION) BILL.

Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.

Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POOR RELIEF (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report to the Local Government Board for Scotland on the methods of administering Poor Relief in certain large town parishes of Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CONTINUATION CLASSES).

Copy presented, of Reports, Statistics, etc., on Continuation Classes (Scotland), 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Report of the Commissioners [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Appendix to Report of the Commissioners, Minutes of Evidence, with Appendices and Maps [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Medway Conservancy. Copy of Statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the Conservators for the year ending March 25th, 1905 [by Act].

MILITIA (SERVICE OUTSIDE UNITED KINGDOM).

Address for "Return showing—

"(1) The number of Militia units and the number of officers and men serving in the Militia on the 1st day of January, 1900.

"(2) The number of Militia units and the number of officers and men, excluding the Militia Reserve, who served outside the United Kingdom at any time between October, 1899, and June, 1902, distinguishing those who served (a) in South Africa; (b) at Mediterranean or other stations outside the United Kingdom.

"(3) The number of Militia Reserve who served in South Africa."—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Prosecution of Poachers—Interference of Fisheries Branch of the Irish Board of Agriculture.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Fisheries Branch of the Agricultural Board have lately interfered with the police in the exercise of their duty, and have prevented them from prosecuting four poachers near Dromara, county Down, who were caught in the act of illegally fishing; and if so, will he say on what grounds was the prosecution in this case forbidden.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The case referred to was reported by the police to the Fisheries Department of the Department of Agriculture in the usual way, but a prosecution was not advised because the evidence was not considered strong enough. The police are on the alert in this district to prevent and detect breaches of the Fishery Laws.

Postal Facilities for Cut Flowers from Caherdaniel, County Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has now made inquiries into the facilities afforded by the Post Office for the forwarding of cut flowers from Caherdaniel, county Kerry; and whether, seeing that this district, though peculiarly suitable for this industry, is nineteen miles from the nearest railway stations, he will secure special facilities for the encouragement of the industry.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have had careful inquiry made as to the postal service to Caherdaniel, and I find that the present service is very expensive as compared with the small amount of revenue derived from correspondence for Caherdaniel, and that the cost of an improved service would be quite disproportionate to any increase of business that might be expected. In any case it would be impossible to afford a rapid service, in view of the hilly and difficult nature of the road. In these circumstances I am sorry I can hold out no expectation of an improved service.

Payment of Salaries of National School Teachers by Dublin Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that sorting clerks and telegraphists at Dublin have to pay the quarterly salaries of national teachers in addition to their ordinary duties; that these officers, with one exception, receive no risk allowance, and that the amount of money paid over the counter by each officer, in sums ranging from 30s. upwards, exceeds £1,000; that, notwithstanding the fact that these payments recently fell due on a Saturday, no departure was made from the rule, with the result that extreme pressure prevailed for many hours; and if so, will he say whether this practice has received his sanction; and will he see that provision is made in future so as to avoid any cause of complaint.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware of the arrangement, which has existed for many years. Although the work of the counter staff is certainly increased by this additional duty, I am assured that, as a whole, it is not more than they can be reasonably expected to perform. If, however, the officers concerned consider that they have any real cause for complaint, and will fully represent the matter to the Controller, inquiry will be made whether any relief is necessary on these occasions.

Admiralty—Dismissal of Mr. Millard.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will give the reason for the dismissal from the service of the Admiralty of Mr. Clement Millard, superintendent civil engineer at Portland.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Lee.*) Mr. Millard was dismissed from the service of the Admiralty on account of his inability to discharge efficiently the duties of his office.

Regulation of Motor Traffic in Scotland.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Lord-Advocate if any instructions were sent from the Scotch Office to local authorities with reference to reconsideration which might be made by them with reference to the regulation of motor traffic, and what were the nature of the same if such were sent; and how many applications have been received from local authorities in Scotland, and the number approved and refused.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Scottish Office has no power to issue instructions in the matter; but the policy of the Department has been not to make restrictive regulations without ascertaining whether local authorities have realised the considerable power of control conferred by the terms of the first section of the Act, and the duty laid upon them to erect sign-posts at dangerous corners, cross roads, and precipitous places, where necessary, under Section 10 of the Act, and various communications have been made with a view to ensuring that these points have been fully considered. Thirty-two applications have been received from local authorities; on seven of these regulations have been issued; seven are still under consideration; the rest have either been refused, formally withdrawn, or otherwise not proceeded with.

Irish Evicted Tenants—Applications for Reinstatement from Patrick O'Neill and Denis O'Connell.

Mr. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received applications for reinstatement from Patrick O'Neill, of Upper Carhan, Cahirciveen, and Denis O'Connell, of Laharan North, on the estate of Sir Daniel Ross O'Connell, near Cahirciveen.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) An application for reinstatement has been received from Denis O'Connell, and will be considered in the event of the estate being dealt with by the Estates Commissioners. No application for reinstatement has been received from Patrick O'Neill.

Negotiations for Purchase of Sir J. Gore Booth's Estate.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the negotiations between the Estates Commissioners and Sir Jocelyn Gore Booth, for the purchase of the latter's estate at Lanagh, Tubbercurry, county Sligo, have yet been brought to a close; and, if so, whether the Estates Commissioners have taken any steps to give effect to the consent of Edward Laying, present occupier of the holding hitherto held by John Quinn, to surrender said holding for the benefit of the former tenant; and, if the negotiations have not yet been completed, will the Chief Secretary take steps to have them expedited so that the arrangements between the present and former tenants may be carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The negotiations between the landlord and his tenants for the sale of this estate have not yet been brought to a close. The efforts made to settle the case of John Quinn have up to the present been unsuccessful, and the Commissioners understand that Quinn has refused the terms offered him.

Manual Instruction in Irish Schools.

Mr. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction has undertaken to make provision for manual instruction in woodwork and other subjects in connection with Irish national schools, as stated in the National Education Board's rules and programmes; and whether, seeing that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction has stated that they are not in a position to make any announcement with regard to this statement in the National Board's programmes issued in April, 1904, and repeated in their new code of rules issued in April, 1905, he will state when the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction will be in a position to make any statement with regard to this announcement, or do the National Education Board purpose retiring from the responsibility of manual instruction.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Negotiations upon this subject are in progress between the Department and the Commissioners, and no definite statement can yet be made as to the arrangements which will be adopted. In the meantime, manual instruction, cookery, etc., continue to form part of the ordinary curriculum in national schools.

Guy's and Waveney Schools, Ballymena.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a grant has been provisionally sanctioned towards rebuilding Guy's Schools, Ballymena, on the necessity for which one of the Board's senior inspectors has reported; and whether, seeing that the rebuilding must be postponed pending the decision of certain questions affecting the endowments and change of site, and that for the last year and nine months the Waveney School, Ballymena, has been supplying necessary additional accommodation, he will explain why the application for aid to this school until additional accommodation was provided elsewhere, when the schools should be amalgamated, has been refused by the Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The fact is as stated in the first inquiry. The Commissioners refused even temporary recognition of the Waveney Applicant School because, in addition to the fact that the school was not needed, the house and premises were reported to be both unsuitable and insanitary.

Advances to Lord Dunraven's Town Tenants in Croom, County Limerick.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the event of agreement between Lord Dunraven and his town tenants in Croom, county Limerick, as to the purchase price of their holdings, the Estates Commissioners will advance the money under the Land Act, 1903, for the purchase of the same, in view of the fact that the tenants on the agricultural part of the estate have arranged to purchase their holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to his Question of yesterday.† The Estates Commissioners will, I have no doubt, deal with every application which may come before them according to their opinion of what is, in the particular case, legal and just; but I cannot possibly state beforehand how they will decide any case.

Assistant Clerks (Abstractor Class)—Benefits of New Scheme.

Mr. NANNETTI: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury what are the actual benefits under the new scheme accruing to assistant clerks (abstractor class) whose service is upwards of six years but does not exceed ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Under the new scheme the present assistant clerks referred to by the hon. Member receive an improved rate of overtime pay.

Mr. NANNETTI: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is his intention to extend the benefits of the new scheme to assistant clerks (abstractor class) already in the service by raising their salaries to the amount which they would now be entitled to receive if the present incremental rate were in existence at the commencement of their service.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) It is not intended to give retrospective effect to the terms of the new scheme.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill:—Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Jordan; and had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Higham and Mr. Joyce.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of York (North Riding, Whitby Division), in the room of Ernest William Beckett, esquire, now Baron Grimthorpe.—(*Mr. H. W. Forster.*)

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) rose to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Mr. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted and forty Members being found present.

Mr. AINSWORTH, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, said that the principles involved had already been accepted by the House in the Bill which was introduced by his hon. friend the Member for the Elland Division of Yorkshire. As to anything else, he hoped to be able to show that it was merely matter of detail. Two main principles were involved in this Bill. The first was that there should be separate assessments for the site value and the value of the buildings on the site. The other point which was brought specially to the front in this Bill was that municipalities should have the power of receiving income from every species of property within the municipal area which was benefiting by municipal expenditure in proportion to the benefit received. He did not think anyone would say that a principle of that kind was in any sense overstrained or unfair, or that it in any way partook of confiscation. When proposals were made with the view of putting the assessments of the kingdom on a more satisfactory footing than at present it was very often retorted that they meant confiscation. He would deal shortly with the question as to how far the provisions of this Bill affected existing property. They were all agreed that Parliament had always retained, and always would retain, the right of arranging for taxation without regard to any agreements entered into between individuals. He did not mean to advocate interference with agreements in any socialistic or confiscatory sense, but he should like to read to the House a statement from the Report of an important Commission which had considered the subject, as showing the broad lines on which it ought to be dealt with. The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes in 1884, in their Report, said—

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† See page 768.

> "Your Majesty's Commissioners are of opinion that until some reform is introduced which shall secure contribution to local expenditure from other sources of income received by residents in the locality, in addition to the present ratable property, no great progress can be made in local improvements."

These words contained the whole point, and what the promoters of this Bill said was that every species of property within the municipal area deriving benefit from the municipality ought to contribute, he would not say an equal proportion, but a reasonable proportion of the municipal assessments. The Report which he had quoted was signed by several eminent men, including no less authorities than the late Lord Salisbury and Lord Goschen. In their final Report the Royal Commission on Local Taxation said—

> "It will be observed that the charge is to be made directly upon the owners of site values (as defined), notwithstanding any past or future contracts to the contrary, and that is justified on the ground that it is unquestionably the right and duty of Parliament to say, when it imposes any public charge, upon whom, and upon what interest, it desires that charge to fall. The case of the income-tax was quoted as a precedent for this course, and it was also suggested that the imposition of the education rate in 1870 was a more violent interference with the equities as between the parties to existing contracts than would be the scheme proposed."

By way of illustration the hon. Member instanced the case which was common in the municipalities of Scotland, where either the original superior, or some other individual, had the power of receiving feu rents for building land. How would the principle which he had stated apply in a case of that kind? Let it be supposed that a perpetual feu had been granted, and that the superior, or other individual, was in the enjoyment of the feu duty paid for the land. The owner of the property benefited from the municipal expenditure. It was easy for the owner to say, "If I had chosen to take £100 down, instead of £3 or £4 a year as feu rent, I should be perfectly free from municipal charges. Instead of doing that I have chosen to take an annual payment which carries with it an agreement that the feuars shall pay the whole cost of present and future rates. How am I benefiting by the municipal expenditure in any way?" In answer to that, he would like to put a case of this kind: How many years purchase would land be worth if put on the market now in the case he had referred to where the feu duty fifty years ago was £3? Further, what had caused the increased capital value of the land unless it was the expenditure by the municipality in improving the municipal area? As he had said, it was not proposed that the owners should be asked to contribute an unreasonable amount of assessment, but if exemption from taxation was claimed the onus should lie on the owners to prove that their property had not benefited, or that it was not likely to benefit in any way by municipal extension or improvement. If the owner could not do so, he should contribute something, no matter how small, for those purposes for which the municipality existed.

As to interference with contracts, he would point out that the Legislature, in dealing with matters of this kind, involving interests which had been created a long time ago, was entitled to take into consideration how much the circumstances which justified a contract at the time it was made—he was speaking now of matters involving the public interest—had altered and varied since that time. He instanced in support of this contention the proposal contained in the Damage to Crops

Bill which was before the House this session. Railway directors would say that when the land for the railways was purchased they calculated every possible contingency in the making of the price, and that the proprietor who was selling the land also took into consideration every possible contingency when the price was fixed. No doubt one of those contingencies was possible damage to crops by sparks from passing trains, but the object of the Bill referred to was to meet the grievance which quite naturally had since grown up on the part of farmers and others. That was a case in which circumstances had changed, and it was proposed that Parliament should impose a new liability on railway companies in respect of damage done in the way indicated. In all cases of so-called contract they could never look upon the contract apart from the circumstances in which it was made as compared with the circumstances of the present time. If the change in circumstances had resulted in the creation of a grievance, it was competent to get rid of the grievance by legislation and to put the matter on a proper basis. He hoped he had said sufficient to show that the promoters of this Bill approached the question without any desire to apply what could be described as confiscation. They only wanted fair treatment on the principles laid down, and on lines on which Parliament had often acted in parallel cases.

An accusation which was sometimes made was that municipal authorities had been spending too freely, that they had got to the end of their tether, and that they were now anxious to sweep into the net of taxation everything they could get hold of. He should like to refer to the case of a municipality in Scotland very much interested in this Bill, and which had a great deal to do with the promotion of it—he meant the Corporation of Glasgow. He reminded the House that during the last fifteen or twenty years Parliament had been continually throwing increased obligations on municipal and local authorities all over the country, and that if their expenditure had increased Parliament had compelled them to spend. Of course, expenditure might be more wisely controlled in some places than in others. He thought that everyone who knew the city of Glasgow acknowledged that every effort had been made to carry out the duties imposed upon them by the Imperial Legislature. What were the rates in Glasgow at the present moment? It would surprise the House to know that the municipal rates, excluding the water rate, the poor rate, and the school board rate, which came under an entirely different category, were on occupiers from 2s. to 2s. 9d. and on owners from 10d. to 1s. Many hon. Members who knew something of the expenditure of large sums in the larger municipalities in different parts of the United Kingdom must acknowledge that that was a very good result. It was not generally known in the House, perhaps even to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the amount borrowed for the municipal debt of the city of Glasgow did not cost the ratepayers, including the sinking fund, more than 3 per cent. The business and financial arrangements of the city of Glasgow were carried out on as good lines as any other municipality in the United Kingdom.

He was perfectly aware that this Bill went further than the English Bill, but Scottish legislative proposals were always in advance of those for the other parts of the United Kingdom. It was so in the case of the licensing laws, local government, and education. The other day, in this House, when the Scotch Education Bill was under discussion, the hon. Member for Camberwell regretted that the benefits given to Scotland by that Bill were not extended to England, whereupon the Lord-Advocate said—

> "It is because you are not educated up to it."

Now, he hoped he might say that that was the justification for the Bill before the House, and that those hon. Members who came down there with the idea that this was a revolutionary measure, embodying extreme ideas, need not be dismayed. He would like to add that, as regarded details, these might be left for consideration and amendment in Committee. He trusted the House would allow the Bill to pass its Second Reading as in the case of the English Bill. He begged to move.

MR. DOBBIE (Ayr Burghs) said he wished to second the Motion that the Bill be read a second time. This Bill, he argued, was not looked upon as in any sense a Party measure. It had behind it a large body of public opinion, and particularly a large body of municipal opinion. It was also noteworthy that every recently-elected Scotch Member had come pledged to support the principle embodied in this Bill. Its supporters believed that in the principle they had a remedy for non-employment, as the principle would break down a monopoly. It would also go far to solve the housing problem. The promoters of the measure also relied on the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, of 1885, which was in favour of taxation of land values. If they were told that this Bill went further than the English Bill, he would say that the principle in the Bill did not depend on whether the clause making the measure retrospective passed through Committee or not. The promoters stood for the principle that the time had come when land values should be intercepted on the way to the pocket of the individual and applied to the expenses of the community through whose growth land values had been created. He believed that the system of perpetual feus in Scotland was a justification of the argument put forward by the advocates of the retrospective clause.

As an analogy, he referred to the Crofters Act. That Act converted contracts for temporary occupancy into contracts for perpetual occupancy. It prevented the landlord from getting the rent of monopoly and compelled him to take a fair rent fixed by Commissioners. This Bill was less drastic than the Crofters Act. The promoters said to the landowner, "Get what ground rent you can, but in so far as that ground rent has been created by the community we ask you to contribute a quota of it towards the expenditure incurred in developing the communities interests." This House had, time and again, applied the same principle. They had at present in Scotland a question which would shortly come before this House. They would be invited shortly to consider the title to church lands and buildings in Scotland, which, so far as the legal title went, belonged absolutely to the members of one Church. But that would not prevent Members opposite from inviting the House to disregard that legal title, and on the ground of equity to take steps to ensure that a large part of that property would come back to the larger body whose members contributed to its creation. The same principle applied to this clause of the Bill. While the promoters were prepared to defend that principle, they only asked now that the Bill should pass its Second Reading, and that further opportunity for discussion should thus be given in Committee.

He thought the case for this Bill had been put better than he could do by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Speaking in 1885, that right hon. Gentleman said that—

> "Groundrents had grown out of the prosperity and industry of the community, and the property had been improved by local expenditure."

They might assume that the right hon. Gentleman had changed his opinion, and they might forgive him for not preferring the non-authorised programme of 1885 to his informal programme of to-day. At all events, it was not for hon. Gentlemen opposite to criticise proposals advocated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham as unintelligent or unworkable. He preferred to go for the economic teaching to Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill; and when they found, as they did in Scotland to-day, landowners, as John Stuart Mill put it, growing richer in their sleep, without work, without economy, and without risk, and when on the other hand they found the burden of local government growing larger every year on account of better and nobler ideals of housing, of comfort, and of enjoyment, and when they found all that burden falling on the shoulders of those least able to bear it, he hoped the House would agree with the municipal authorities in Scotland in saying that the time had come to face and grapple with that problem. He hoped the House would permit an opportunity of discussing the Bill in Committee. Hon. Members would then be able to consider in detail a principle which had the approval of a large section of public opinion in Scotland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR **HUGH SHAW-STEWART** (Renfrew, E.) said that in rising to move the rejection of this Bill, he would first take leave to reply to what he knew would be said, viz., that the Motion came from a Member who was personally interested in the rejection of the measure. But to say that a landowner was personally interested in the rejection of this Bill was not by any means to state the full extent of the issue, for he should proceed to show that the interests of the landowner and the public interests were in this matter identical.

He counted it a privilege to take any part in this controversy, which aroused much attention, and would arouse more, but he should not tax the patience of the House by resorting to quotations from authorities in order to prove his case, for he held that quotations, while of great value in articles and essays, were better avoided in speeches. He should therefore content himself in this respect by merely naming high authorities on whose evidence he might rely, citing such names as Sir Robert Giffen, Mr. Gladstone, and the Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. He should like to mention also an admirable speech by the hon. Member for Finsbury in the recent debate on the corresponding English Bill.

Discarding quotations, therefore, he would proceed to deal with certain fallacies which existed in the public mind; for, if he could expose successfully these fallacies, he should have gone far to cut away the chief supports from this measure. The first fallacy was that feu-duties and ground values were possessed and enjoyed chiefly by large landowners. In reality feu-duties were bought and sold like other stock in the money market, and were largely used as safe investments by individuals of small means, as well as by institutions such as churches, hospitals, and charitable societies. So that this Bill, by placing extra taxes on feu-duties and ground values, would affect not only landowners but in large proportion the individuals and institutions he had named.

The second fallacy was that the landowner who had land to feu had only to sit at home and wait for applicants, strike a bargain, and pocket the purchase money. In reality he must first lay out large sums in plans for houses, gardens, streets, sewers, drains, and water supply, and, in most cases, actually make the streets and sewers and supply the water before a shilling came back to him. He had to wait for a return for his money. It was all the more necessary for him to set his plans so that he might get the best return for his money when it did come; and the better return the landowner eventually got for his money the higher ratable value would accrue to the town and the more permanent would be the improvements made by the landowner who could afford to wait. Further, it was becoming more and more recognised (they saw it in proposals for what were called Garden Cities) that attention should be paid to the public demand for open spaces and gardens intermixed with houses or cottages, and all who heard him would agree that gardens ought to be encouraged for two reasons: (*a*) they afforded valuable and healthy breathing spaces, (*b*) they were a source of good wages for a healthy occupation. But if this Bill passed a landowner would at once have to stop all plans devised to benefit himself and the public in this way; he would be "taxed out" of useful projects for open spaces; and he would be driven to a slovenly system of feuing his land as quickly as possible to the first building speculator who came along, to the loss and detriment of the whole community.

But there was a third fallacy in that some people, admitting loss to owners of feu-duties, large and small, admitting loss of the most suitable plans for developing towns, admitting the loss of open spaces, said that immense pecuniary benefits would accrue to the town in other ways. Well, they made the statement, but did they succeed in proving it? He was sorry not to see the hon. Member for East Edinburgh in his place. The hon. Member lately stated that if the provisions of the Bill had been in force when he was City Treasurer a large annual sum instead of a small sum would have been paid in respect of several acres of unbuilt land used for market gardens. True, a nominally larger sum would be raised by taxation, but he omitted to balance against the larger sum what would have been the additional annual cost to the city in respect of paving, cleaning, lighting, and watching the streets and properties thereon, and these pretty large sums fell to be deducted from the hon. Member's estimate. That proved that grossly exaggerated estimates were made, even by persons of some experience, of the income likely to accrue to towns from this tax. Further, he would ask hon. Members to look at the provisions of Clause 7, dealing with deductions from assessment. Could they read through these provisions and maintain that all these deductions could be made from each yearly assessment without immense labour and cost both to the burgh and to the individual ratepayer? All this cost must be deducted from the estimated increase of revenue.

There was an entirely new principle raised in this Bill. Local taxation had never yet been raised on capital, but always on income; was the House going to introduce a new principle of taxation in a private Member's Bill on a Friday afternoon? But why limit the new principle to investments in land? Why not enforce a corresponding tax on investments in stocks and shares? Why should a tradesman when he invested £100 or £1,000 in building-land be subjected to this extra tax, and when he invested another £100 or £1,000 in stocks or shares escape this tax? The truth was that they were raising the whole question of taxation of real and personal property, and they could not deal with this great question on a side issue. He would also draw the attention of the House to one particular provision of this Bill, viz.: Clause 7 (*f*) which made the principle of the Bill retrospective. Imagine the confusion that would arise if this provision passed. What a glorious opportunity for endless litigation!

How did the representatives of the Labour Party look on this Bill? Could they point to any benefit likely to come to the great body of the people by this costly experiment. Would not increased taxation mean increased rents? Ought they not rather to favour the promotion of gradual development to suit all classes with a due proportion of gardens and open spaces? He said he would refrain from quotations: but he confessed he was sorely tempted to quote from Mr. Wallace, president of the Land Nationalisation Society, as to the result of taxation of land values in America, and from the organ *Justice* of the Social Democratic Federation regarding similar results in Paris, both of which proved that land needed in, or near towns, became in consequence of similar Bills the sport of the jerry-builder—but he refrained, in return for the patience with which the House has heard his remarks.

He ended as he began by resting his case on the ground that the interests of the landowner and the public interests were identical. What was the great need of the present day? To make the suitable development of building land for houses (whether villas or workmen's cottages), open spaces, and gardens, more easy and not more difficult, and he said that this Bill would make it more difficult by artificially raising the price of land, as they had seen occur in the United States and Paris. What was the great danger of the present day? The temptation of burghs and cities was to embark on reckless municipal expenditure, and this Bill would increase the temptation without providing any real increase of the means at their disposal. He asked the House to reject this measure on the ground that it would injure all public interests, except one, viz.: an interest which they all respected, and which they could not do without, but which in no way required, nor indeed, expected, special favours from this House—he meant the legal interest.

Mr. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central) was of opinion that the subject of the Bill was too complicated and the principle too far-reaching in its character to be discussed and decided by an empty House in an afternoon. The proposal to tax feu-duties and ground which was the subject of agitation when he first stood for Parliament had been largely abandoned in favour of taxation of land values. The objects of the Bill were two-fold. First, to provide an additional fund from which rates might be relieved and further improvements in burghs carried out; second, to break down what was called land monopoly, and so to cheapen building land and reduce rents in so far as the cost of land entered into the cost of providing the houses. These objects were probably popular. Another consideration was that vacant spaces in towns and building lots just outside the towns were alleged to be held up for a rise in price though either not rated at all or only at agricultural value. He did not justify such holding up, as contrary to public policy and the interest of landowners generally, and hoped that the question might be dealt with in some other way. But, in order to remedy one injustice, they should not proceed to inflict other injustice of a widespread character. If, however, such land was held up, the probability was that when it came into use the building would be more valuable and form a subject for higher assessment than if it had come earlier into the market and been covered with inferior buildings, so that in the long run the ratepayers would not suffer. But he should be told that this was not entirely a ratepayers' question, and that the landowner had no right to the higher value conferred on the land by the presence of the community. This introduced the doctrine of unearned increment which, whether right or wrong, he would not discuss, but which was undoubtedly in the Bill. The proprietor of a house would have extreme difficulty in assessing the value of the land apart from the building. These feu-duties were a favourite form of investment of the funds of charitable societies. Churches and other bodies who sought a certain income with good security would be hit both in capital and income if this proposal were carried into effect. He condemned the provision for breaking existing contracts, remarking that those who had entered into such contracts would be unable to escape, while those who desired to make such contracts in the future would probably find a way of doing so. Finally, he considered that the House should be guided by the Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, which was against the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'" — (*Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said it was with extreme diffidence that he ventured to intervene in this debate as he was not capable of speaking as an expert on the subject of land values. He was, however, compelled to speak because of what he might call his Parliamentary conscience, although he had great difficulty in deciding how to act regarding the Bill. He might say that he was not at all financially involved by the measure. He agreed with the main principle of the taxation of land values, and he had experienced no hesitation in voting for the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Elland some weeks ago regarding the application of that principle to England, but he doubted whether the introduction of a Bill of this kind would do much to help that principle. He was not at all sure that the advance, if it could be so called, was not entirely in a wrong direction, and if it was a question of being educated up to such a measure he was afraid he had not yet attained that measure of education.

A great deal had been said regarding the sacredness of contracts, but he had no hesitation in saying that no contract was sacred from the operation of Parliament, provided it became a menace to the public good. The safety of the people was the supreme law, and so far as that went he did not think there was any harm in dealing with the question. There was no justification for the taxation of feu-duties. Supposing he wanted to buy a piece of land in the neighbourhood of a town worth £1,000 and went to a landowner who offered to sell it to him outright. Having paid the landowner the £1,000, supposing the latter went away and squandered the £1,000 in riotous living they could not get at him any more. But if he went to another landowner who said, "I will not only sell to you, but will advance you the whole sum and you will pay me interest at the rate of £40 a year and for that I shall have the security of the land," why should they go back upon that bargain and tax what was practically interest on a mortgage. He could not see the slightest reason for that. They were told that it was the landlord who ought to be mulcted for the public good, but this man was not the landlord, and the Bill was not going to mulct him for the public good. Feu-duties were still invested in by friendly societies, trades unions, and small people, and these were the people who would be taxed and they would not be taxed for the public good, because it would be simply transferring the tax from the pocket of the occupier—the feu-holder—to the feu superior. Therefore, there would be nothing for the public good. He considered that was the great evil of the Bill.

At the same time he admitted there was a great injustice in respect to feus which he desired to see remedied, and in that desire he was supported by the hon. Member for Central Glasgow. If they took a Scotch burgh they would find a large amount of land outside the town rated at its agricultural value, say £1 per acre, yet the owner of that land knew that to-morrow he could feu the land for £10, £20, or £40 per acre. It was unfair that this land should not be rated at its proper value and that the landowner should be allowed to walk off by feuing the land and no longer be rated. He was in sympathy with the principle of the rating of land values, but he felt a great difficulty whether or not he should vote for the principle without voting for a great deal of the evil which was embodied in this Bill. If this were a Government Bill introduced by either Party he should unhesitatingly vote against it; if it were a private Member's Bill, introduced early in the session and likely to pass, he should vote against it; but seeing that a Bill introduced at this period of the session was not likely to pass, he should regard a vote in favour of it as merely a vote in favour of the principle of taxing land values.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said that as reference had been made to the difference between the Bill now under consideration and the measure read a second time recently relating to England and Wales, it would be well for the House to understand how the two Bills were related. Although their methods differed considerably they had their foundation in the same movement. Three years ago a large conference of rating authorities, held in London, declared with practical unanimity that the principle of levying a portion of the rates upon land values was just and equitable, and they deputed a representative committee to draw up a Bill or Bills embodying the principle. That committee soon found that it was impossible to draw one Bill applicable to both English and Scotch conditions, and therefore separate measures were drafted for the two countries. Every candid man would admit that the conditions in Scotland were very different from the conditions in England. In Scotland they already had a division of the rates in some degree between the owner and the occupier, and that was a considerable justification for the fact that the Scotch Bill went further than the English measure. He would not argue the Second Reading of the Bill simply on the question of whether perpetual feu-duties ought to be included in or exempted from the operation of the Bill. He was glad to see on the Treasury Bench, representing the Government, a Gentleman who had already voted in favour of the principle of the taxation of land values, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would to-day give a further declaration of his belief in the principle, although he might have criticisms to offer on the extent or the methods of this particular measure.

The mover of the rejection of the Bill had referred to three fallacies commonly held in relation to this matter. The first was that it would be unjust to levy a portion of the rates on land values because the owner had to spend a great deal on drains and streets before the land could be developed. But that was an element in the valuation, and it was a deduction which any valuer would take into account before fixing the value of an undeveloped estate. The second fallacy was that such a proposal would tax gardens out of existence. The very opposite would be the case.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART: It has prevented the making of gardens and open spaces in America.

MR. WHITLEY said the hon. Member must be mistaken, as there was no similar Act in operation in America. He was probably referring to the Improvements Clause, but even that had not had the effect which the hon. Member suggested. Personally, he was strongly convinced that the application of the principle of this measure would lead to a large increase in the amount of land attached to houses. The price of an estate in the course of its development from agricultural to building land increased on the average no less than seven-fold. For agricultural purposes 6d. per square yard might be taken as an extreme price, but that identical land, without anything having been done to it, rose to at least 3s. 6d. per square yard before it was utilised for housing purposes.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART: Streets and sewers would have to be made.

MR. WHITLEY: I am speaking quite apart from streets and sewers.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART: But you said nothing would have been done to the land.

MR. WHITLEY said he had already dealt with the point that the necessary expenditure for the development of an estate was a deduction which would be taken into account, and he was now speaking quite apart from that particular matter. If the effect of the passing of the Bill was to render land available for building purposes directly it left its agricultural value, a man might get for the same price seven times as much land in connection with his house, or with the same amount of land there would be less cost and consequently less rent to pay. As to public open spaces, it would unquestionably immensely increase the facilities of local authorities for purchasing and holding open spaces. A gentleman in Manchester had recently advocated that a garden belt should be formed around English cities before they expanded further in order that the horrible accumulation of bricks and mortar might be prevented. But that would never be accomplished unless some such Act as was now proposed were in existence, because it would be absolutely impracticable for local authorities to purchase the necessary land.

The third fallacy to which the hon. Member referred was that a large revenue would be derived from the taxation of land values. Personally, he had never based his advocacy of this principle purely or even mainly on its financial aspects. It would bring in a certain new revenue, but not to the extent which some people wildly stated. He held strongly that the social advantages of this reform would be infinitely greater than any financial benefit. It was a proposal, not for creating a new tax, but for abolishing a bad exemption. Why should land, which more than any other property gained from local expenditure, be exempt from contributing to local taxation? Two men might have plots of land one alongside the other. If one man put up a house he was immediately rated on the house and the land, but the other man, if he held his land, although it would be increasing in value from the expenditure of the community, would be exempted.

The question had been asked why, if land was taxed on its capital value, stocks and shares should not be similarly taxed. That was a very old argument. If it was simply a question of rating a man according to his property or wealth the one should be rated as well as the other. But land held a relation to the community which dwelt upon it, and which could not exist without it. If land were a monopoly in the hands of one person everybody would be advocating the passage of such a measure as he was now supporting, and the fact that the monopoly was in the hands of a large number of persons—large in itself, but small in proportion to the whole community—only mitigated, and did not in any way remove the evil. It was possible for these persons to extract a large part of the wealth created by great industrial communities and yet give nothing back for the benefits they had received. This was the great social evil they were endeavouring to remove in the proposals of this and the English Bill.

He thought they were justified in continuing to bring forward these proposals. They had had a confession not long ago from the Treasury Bench that the Government had no hope of dealing with the rating question, and therefore how could the hon. Member blame them for endeavouring to bring this subject forward on a Friday afternoon. They had waited patiently for ten years and yet the Government had made no move. He hoped that the time was not far distant when a move of some kind would be made in the direction they were advocating. They had had a great object-lesson near at hand during the last few weeks in the case of East Ham. There a great community was groaning under the burden of the rates, and feeling it so severely that they had been compelled to throw off the obligations which the House had placed upon them. That district was nothing but a swamp twenty-five years ago, and now it was covered with miles of dismal streets and houses of one pattern, where the overflow of London's population went to sleep after their day's work was done. The complaint was that there was not ratable value enough to bear the burden of the local debt placed upon it. And why? Because the great natural rate fund had been abstracted. Before this vast area could be used for sleeping purposes, in the interval between the swamp and the erection of the buildings, the great value had been taken by the owner of the swamp, and the kernel having been taken away they were left only with the husks. No conceivable ratable value could meet the financial obligations of the community. For this they had a remedy near at hand, and that was to restore to the community a part of that natural rate fund which had been created in land values by the presence of the community. This was obvious from the very fact that every busy industrial community raised the value of the land in its neighbourhood, and that indicated to all reasonable men that there was a natural rate fund there which ought to be applied in large part to the fundamental needs of that community. If they could only get that done they would have none of those difficulties and rebellions against the obligations put upon them by Parliament.

He was suffering from a bad cold and did not intend to inflict himself at any length upon the attention of the House, but he should like to commend to the Lord-Advocate the study of a recent Blue-book issued by the Government. It was called "Further Correspondence Relating to the Affairs of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony," and it was circulated one day last week. It contained the Report of the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal and gave a most interesting description of what they had done in the matter of rating there. It described how they had considered, with the best expert advice they could command, the way in which they should set up their new rating system in the recreation of a properly-governed community, and this was their conclusion—

> "The fundamental conception of the Bill was to rate according to its capital value each separate interest in land, exempting only those due to expire in ten years or less."

Now these two measures became law by Proclamation in July, 1902, and so they had had three years experience of their working. They went on to say on the next page that already—

> "The rating law had actually stood the test of application."

A little further on there was an interesting reference to the city of Glasgow in which they stated—

> "A noticeable feature in this Ordinance is the provision for the recovery of rates modelled on the practice adopted in Glasgow, which has proved highly effective both in securing the punctual payment of rates and in reducing the cost of collection."

They were asking the House that afternoon to take a lesson in the same school. There was another interesting quotation which bore most closely on the point they were discussing. This had the imprimatur of Lord Milner and the very Government which was now represented on the Treasury Bench. Therefore he hoped the Lord-Advocate was not going to deny to a less-favoured community what already as a member of the Government he had consented to in the new colony of the Transvaal. The Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal said—

> "The land within and even beyond a radius of six miles had acquired a high prospective value

from the expectation that within a few years it would be converted into suburbs. A great portion of it had already been marked out and sold as townships. However wide this area might appear it was certain that the land acquired its high value owing to the proximity of the town near at hand. There appeared to be nothing inequitable, therefore, in making the owners of these lands contribute to the general expenses of the community whose industry and enterprise were responsible for nine-tenths of the value which these lands had acquired."

In this Bill they were not asking for nine-tenths but only for one-tenth of that value. He would make just one other reference to another document. He was challenged the other day in regard to some figures which he gave relating to the effect of a tax of this kind in the colony of New South Wales. The hon. Member for Salford was good enough to hand to him the Report of the Labour Commission to the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales for the year 1904, no doubt thinking that this document would destroy the facts on which he had based his argument. His argument was that the removal of the exemption of those land sites from municipal rating had a great effect in reducing the number of the unemployed, and he gave some very striking figures showing how in New South Wales the figures had dropped after the introduction of the measure first to one-half and afterwards to one-third of the numbers they stood at previously to the adoption of this Report. He found the document of the hon. Member for Salford, presented to him to remove his ignorance, only confirmed him in his belief, because it stated on the very second page that—

> "In the suburbs the land tax superimposed on municipal taxation has stimulated the owners of vacant land into doing something to secure a return for their outlay. During the commercial depression which this State passed through a few years ago, many people who rented houses found it necessary to rent one or two rooms only, or to share a house with their neighbours. With the recovery from the general depression, families are once more enabled to enjoy a house to themselves."

That, of course, had a double effect on the comfort of the population and production naturally, and not by any artificial means of work for the unemployed. He was not a great believer in any of those State systems of machinery for making artificial employment, but he did believe that here was a great remedy which would find employment by natural means, without too much State officialism, if they took away this power of withholding land from its best use. In his opinion there ought to be no willing worker in this country unemployed as long as there was land put to anything less than its best use, and, if they levied even a small tax or rate upon land which was withheld from its best use, in that way they would, better than by artificial methods, bring work to those who were now workless, and at the same time they would be liberating the land surrounding all great cities, and enabling the people to live with more air about them and more comfort inside their houses than at the present time.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) rose to address the House.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough) drew attention to the fact that fewer than forty Members were present.

A quorum was, after a brief interval, formed, and

*SIR CHARLES RENSHAW proceeded with his speech. He said that the hon. Member for Halifax had endeavoured to justify the difference between the proposals of the Bill now under consideration and the measure which the hon. Member for Elland had previously submitted to the House. The hon. Member for Halifax had stated that the conditions of Scotland were different from those of England, inasmuch as there was already a division in the rating between owners and occupiers, and that, therefore, that was the ground on which this Bill proposed to go further than the English Bill. On the occasion when the English Bill was before the House, Scotch and Irish Members were asked to support it because, it was alleged, its provisions might subsequently be extended to Scotland and Ireland. He did not know whether the hon. Member for Elland regarded this measure as the same as the Bill which he introduced.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): In principle.

*Sir CHARLES RENSHAW said there was a very great difference between this Bill and the hon. Member's English Bill. In the first place, there was the somewhat striking feature that not a single name which appeared on the Bill of 14th April was on the back of this Bill. It was also to be noticed that the Bill then under consideration was prefaced by a very clear explanatory note showing what the actual proposals of the Bill were. Now, he noticed that on this Bill there was an absence of any such Memorandum. There were other very significant differences. The Member for Elland proposed to capitalise the site value and make a charge in respect of rates calculated at 3 per cent. on the site value. Again, the English Bill carefully safeguarded all existing contracts. By that measure the rates were to be levied on the value of the building and on the value of the land; that was to say, there would be a separate rate levied as between the value of the site and the value of the buildings on the site; and there was power given to deal with parks and pleasure grounds. In the present Bill the valuation was not to be taken at 3 per cent. Most of them who were familiar with land ownership would be very satisfied with such a rate of investment. This Bill went much further than the English Bill, and took 4 per cent. of the value of the land. There was to be a new rate, limited to 2s. in the £ on the value of the land when it had been fixed; but the net proceeds of such new assessment was to be leviable only upon owners. This additional rate upon the owners was to be used in relief of the occupying ratepayers. Occupiers were apparently to pay their rates on the present full value, whilst owners were to pay their share on the basis at which they paid at present, and to pay an additional rate as well.

He did not think hon. Members generally realised what a large proportion of rates was paid in respect of ownership in Scotland. The latest Local Taxation Returns which were available—those for 1901, the Scotch Office being remiss in that respect—showed that out of assessments raised in burghs, counties, and parishes in Scotland in that year, of £4,890,000, £2,190,000 was raised in respect of ownership, and £2,700,000 was raised in respect of occupancy. It was rather curious to observe that whilst the rates in counties on ownership were nearly twice what they were on occupancy, the rates on occupancy in burghs were almost three times what they were in respect of ownership. At the same time there were a large number of rates in burghs, such as those for municipal buildings, roads, and bridges, poor rate, and the like, which were levied half on owners and half on occupiers; while in the city of Glasgow the occupier paid the whole of the police, sanitary, and domestic water rate. He ventured to submit that any change of the kind suggested in the Bill, if it became law, would have the effect of throwing a heavy additional burden upon ownership as against occupancy, and that would inflict a very considerable amount of hardship. Supporters of this Bill always maintained that owners did not bear their proper share of the rates in urban localities, because the expenditure of the rates in the locality benefited their property, and therefore they ought to bear a larger proportion than they now did. In the great city of Glasgow, which was typical of other burghs in Scotland, he did not believe that it could be urged that such a transference could be made, relieving as it would do the occupying tenants of the burgh, and throwing an additional burden on ownership, without compelling owners to pay something which gave them really no direct benefit. The benefit of rates levied on occupancy attached far more to occupancy than to ownership. He knew of no greater hardship than the fact that the police in the counties of Scotland were entirely paid at the expense of ownership; and yet those police were available, not primarily for the purpose of protecting landowners or of seeing that people did not run away with houses, but were maintained to preserve law and order amongst the citizens generally, who were far more numerous as occupiers than as owners. He had always felt that that was a hardship upon the owners, and that the occupiers should bear a fair share of the burden of the police rate.

Clause 7 seemed to be a sort of afterthought; he did not think it appeared in the early Bills. That clause proposed to abrogate all contracts entered into before the measure became law. This was the most striking difference between the English and the Scotch Bill. He regretted that the hon. Member for Argyllshire, and the hon. Member for Ayr Burghs, in moving and seconding the Bill, did not make use of any fresh arguments in support of this very drastic proposal. He knew that the basis of a Bill of this kind was said to be found in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Taxation, which was signed by Lord Balfour of Burleigh and the late Lord Kinross; but that Report stated that all existing contracts should be absolutely respected. He contended that there was no justification for a measure so extreme as that now submitted for the consideration of the House.

What would be the position of the unfortunate landowner in Scotland—for he would be unfortunate indeed—if this Bill ever passed? He would have to value for himself the value of the land upon which his house, or railway, or dock, or factory was built separately from the value attaching to the buildings upon it. It was suggested that there was a parallel in the case of valuation for income-tax. But that was a totally different question. When a man made a return of his income he had got to deal with no intangible quantity; but here the unfortunate owner of property had got to face all the problems which had vexed the most acute and capable minds of many generations of valuators, and fix the value of the land apart from the buildings. He had also to shut out from his mind everything that was built on the site in his immediate neighbourhood. Then he had to close his eyes and refuse to consider the question of the value of the site from an amenity point of view. This was one of the most difficult problems to approach; and he could not imagine anything more injurious to industrial life in Scotland than that a Bill of this kind should become law. The hon. Member for Halifax referred to East Ham. What was to prevent any man going down there and establishing a factory? It was the high rates amounting to 10s. in the £. But when a man put up a factory in such a locality he knew perfectly what he was about, and that he would have to pay 10s. in the £ for rates; but if he went outside that district he would only have to pay perhaps 2s. or 3s. in the £. Naturally this was a consideration in fixing a locality for creating public works.

The corporation of the great city of Glasgow had decided to support this Bill which dealt very drastically with the ownership of land. It proposed to place an additional heavy burden on ownership, in order to render the position of the occupying tenant better than it was at present. The difficulty of arriving at an equitable assessment of the separate values of a site and the buildings upon it would be insuperable. Moreover, in his opinion the cost of assessment would be enormously increased if they made provisions of the extraordinary kind proposed in this Bill. He admitted the necessity of broadening the basis on which local rates were raised. But they ought not to bring in the capital value of land alone. What was required was a complete change of the system on which local rates were levied. He denied that the Bill would be likely to reduce local expenditure. On the contrary, it proposed to tap an additional source of taxation from a comparatively few owners of property, holding out thereby an inducement to municipal extravagance. As indicating the importance of the question, he would mention that the receipts of local authorities in Scotland in 1901-2 was £16,811,000, as compared with £8,516,000 in 1891–2. No doubt the public mind was vexed at these constant additions to taxations. The Bill, indeed, upset the existing system, and would not settle anything. It was a thoroughly bad measure, the effect of which would be prejudicial to the best interests of local government in Scotland. It aimed a blow at contractual obligations, and generally it would retard the progress of a final settlement of local taxation difficulties and anomalies. The question of rating reform was a very large and important one; and he should prefer it should be dealt with by his right hon. friends than by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

*MR. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.) said that he had been engaged in municipal work in the district in which he lived for upwards of twenty years. The increase of land value to the superiors had been growing from year to year in this industrial centre in Scotland, so that the income derivable from the land had been greatly augmented through the enterprise of the people. He maintained also that the superiors, who possessed enormous power, placed conditions in contracts which feuars had to accept, otherwise the land would not be let to them. His municipal experience had convinced him, therefore, that the principle of the Bill was right in the interests of the community that created the value of the land. It would not only be a step in the right direction, but it would spread taxation and make it more equitable than at present. He cited the case of a water scheme promoted in his district at a cost of over £100,000, the water being taken from bare hills miles away where the land was practically of little value. The municipality had to pay thousands of pounds for the land and way-leaves, and they wanted to see a better division of the incidence of taxation, so that those who were reaping the benefit of these public improvements should also pay their share of public burdens bearing so heavily to-day on many municipalities. The city assessor of Glasgow, who dealt with over 5,500,000 rentals in a year, did not consider there would be much difficulty in dealing with the site and the buildings values separately. He was of opinion that this Bill could be considered in Committee so as to deal fairly with all the interests involved.

*SIR WILLIAM ARROL (Ayrshire, S.) said that as a resident in Glasgow it was something new to him to have to come so far in order to learn what was happening in that great city. He was very much interested in trade and commerce, and was naturally interested in ground values in the vicinity of their large industrial concerns. This Bill, as far as he could see, would in a good many ways be a very serious thing in connection with their engineering industries, which it would hamper in a good many ways. He had been a resident in Glasgow for over forty years, and had taken an active part in the industries in and 'round about the city, and he was very much surprised to see that a great city like that could not get any representative to put forward its case, and should require to go to Argyllshire and Ayrshire for the purpose of bringing forward a matter actually affecting it as a great commercial city. He would like to refer to what had been said about Motherwell. There were no great land difficulties there in connection with public works, and he did not think Motherwell had any grievance. But he thought they in Glasgow, in which he had been interested for forty years, had a considerable grievance because they had to provide houses for the people working in Motherwell. He had told the Motherwell people that it was a disgrace that they could not build houses for their own workmen instead of driving them into Glasgow.

Now he came to the question of the value of land in Glasgow. He knew something about that. When he started business he had only a small piece of ground in the city. Having but a limited capital he had to be very cautious. It was impossible for him to take a large piece of ground; so as his requirements grew he had to go farther afield. He first paid 5s. per square yard for his ground. Later on he required to extend his business premises, and had to pay 9s. 6d. per square yard for ground lying alongside his premises. A few years later he paid 16s. for ground for extension, and a neighbour at a later date had to pay 27s. for a piece on the other side of the street. As much as 40s. was asked for ground on the estate alongside. When the City Bank crash came the whole of that ground came down in value, and he got the same ground as he had paid 16s. and his neighbour 27s. at 7s. 6d. per square yard. As his business continued to grow he had to cross the street in another direction to ground for which the corporation and the school board had at an earlier date paid 15s., and he got the remainder for 7s. right out. What were land values under these conditions? Land was just a commodity and its value depended upon its use. Then he returned to his original side of the street and got land on another estate. Twenty-five years previously he had bought land at 27s., and he was able to get the remainder at 8s. three years ago. The rise and fall had been felt in every district in Glasgow, and hundreds of people had been ruined by speculating in land expecting it to remain at a high price. The cause of all this was, no doubt, greatly due to speculation in land. Whenever the Glasgow Corporation required anything they put 1d. or 2d. on the improvement rate, and the result was that there were hundreds of men speculating in different properties in Glasgow.

They had heard a great deal about garden cities around their larger industrial centres, but in his opinion there were no better lungs for a city than large works, with extensive open spaces, and if the Glasgow Corporation would try to reduce the rates so as to accommodate large works within the boundaries instead of driving them out, it would be a great deal better for the citizens and for the working population. The members of the corporation were for the most part very small ratepayers, and they never felt the burden they put on the people by driving the large industries outside the city. The result would be the same as in the East End of London. The works would be unable to pay the rates, and the working people in the district would be overburdened. He might give another instance of the difficulty of creating garden cities. He was interested in a concern employing about 2,000 hands. It was about ten miles outside the city, and houses were built for the workpeople, though most of them preferred to live in the city. The reason why the men were willing to work outside and yet live in the city of Glasgow was in order to get employment for the girls and women left in it. He knew a case where a man was content to live in Glasgow and get 5s. less weekly than he would have had living in Dumbarton where he worked simply because in the former place he had better facilities for finding employment for the female members of his family.

MR. FINDLAY: Might not that be the reason why men working at Motherwell prefer to live in Glasgow.

SIR WILLIAM ARROL, in conclusion, urged that it was the duty of the Glasgow Corporation to give every facility for large works to be carried on within the city boundaries.

MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS (Lanarkshire, N.W.) failed to gather from his remarks whether or not the hon. Member who spoke last intended to vote for the Bill, but felt at any rate that he had supplied them with a great many valuable concrete illustrations which greatly strengthened the case in support of the measure. The promoters of the Bill were very sensible of the evils arising from speculation in land which was largely stimulated by the present system of rating, and they were equally sensible of the burden of the rates upon industry in towns and in crowded districts, and these were amongst the reasons that led him to support the present Bill. It had been fortunate that the discussion had proceeded on principles rather than on the details of the Bill. He did not complain that more than one Member had dealt with a very important detail, viz., the question of the taxation of feu-duties as proposed under the Bill. He readily understood the reluctance of the hon. Member who introduced the Bill, and of those who advised him to see the past results of the rating system go unchallenged. He concurred very largely with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Kincardineshire, that this was a part of the Bill which required to be amended, and it certainly was a matter which could be dealt with in Committee. He would not therefore labour the point at that stage. But although he had that opinion with regard to that particular point, he had no hesitation in giving a whole-hearted support to the Motion for the Second Reading. After all, the principle of the Bill was not affected by the question of how the new burden on land was to be distributed or how they were going to deal with existing contracts.

It was the view of those who supported the Bill that the value of land was enormously increased by public expenditure, and therefore it was the fairest subject for special taxation for local purposes. Some indeed went further and said that the value of land as land, apart from all matters of capital invested in it, was altogether due to public expenditure and to the population by which that expenditure was required. Eventually all public expenditure went to increase the value of the land in the neighbourhood in which the public money was laid out. The houses and buildings on the land were worth no more as buildings, and the insurance value on them was no greater on account of the public expenditure. Notoriously the increase went altogether to the value of the site. His hon. friend the Member for East Renfrewshire had asked why stocks and shares should not be similarly dealt with. Well, if he could show a case in which local expenditure had benefited any other class of property, he admitted at once it would be a fair case for consideration, especially if it were a kind of property which was in its very nature what land was—a monopoly. He believed that his hon. friend disputed the contention that property—as garden land—was a monopoly, but he was bound to admit that in the matter of locality it was a monopoly, and their contention was that locality was the very essence of the case. By land they did not mean a patch of land anywhere; they meant that land in a particular situation gained value from local expenditure, and it could not be replaced by any other tract of land in the world. The locality was the monopoly, and therefore for their purposes land in the sense of site was a monopoly. They therefore claimed that there was ample justification for imposing special taxation on site values. The public authorities were entitled to draw upon the value which their expenditure had given to the land. The question whether the expenditure was extravagant was an absolute side issue, but the contention was that the local authorities could not meet their obligations and could not maintain the standard of a civilised community under modern industrial conditions unless they were allowed to go to those who were their proper debtors and obtain for the community something of the value which communal expenditure had given to the land which they were privileged to use. On that ground they claimed that land ought to be rated separately from all other subjects, and should bear its share of the burden caused by that expenditure which had contributed so largely to its value.

The Member for West Renfrew had spoken of the heavy burden of rates in East Ham and had suggested that as an argument against the Bill. But the reply to that was that if the local authorities had had access, as they should have done, to the value of the improvements which they themselves were making, the burden of rates upon houses and industry would have been very different to what it was to-day. He personally, however, attached far more importance to another point. His hon. friend the Member for the Central Division of Glasgow had expressed very strongly the view that the holding up of the land for higher prices was a misfortune, but he had not suggested to them a means by which that misfortune might be remedied. He himself thought the misfortune was greatly encouraged by the present system of rating. That system constituted a positive exemption of the very subject which it was most desirable to rate heavily in order that there might be a greater inducement to bring it into the market. It was not only unjust but in the highest degree impolitic that there should be a holding up of land for a ransom price. It was because he found his views on this point expressed in the Bill that he should support it. Its machinery might be imperfect, it contained, no doubt, provisions that ought to and could be modified in Committee, but it gave effect to a view which, in his opinion, was sound in policy, and therefore he had no hesitation in giving it his support.

*MR. HOZIER said he felt the Bill was not one on which he ought to give a silent vote. The hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire had stated that he was supporting a Bill for the taxation of land values, but he had carefully explained that he was only going to vote for it on general principles. He objected to the taxation of feu-duties and therefore could not be said to be in favour of the Bill.

MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS: I took exception to a single clause.

*MR. HOZIER: It is the longest and most important clause. Does every hon. Member opposite repudiate it then?

MR. TREVELYAN pointed out that a good many of those who were in favour of the taxation of land values repudiated that clause.

*MR. HOZIER: Is my hon. friend's name on the back of the Bill?

MR. TREVELYAN: No.

*MR. HOZIER said he wanted someone whose name was on the back of the Bill to say if the promoters repudiated the clause. Continuing, he said he desired to congratulate the hon. Member for South Ayrshire on his admirable contribution to that day's debate. He was an oppressed feuar on his (the speaker's) father's property in Glasgow, and he was glad that he seemed to be pretty well satisfied. It was a somewhat remarkable fact when they considered the enormous interest supposed to be taken in that Bill in Scotland that when the House was almost counted out there were only five Scotch Members on the Opposition side.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): How many were there on your side?

*MR. HOZIER: We are not bound to make a House for this Bill, of which we disapprove.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): There were twenty-four Scottish Members on this side.

*MR. HOZIER: That was not so, but at any rate the House was within an ace of being counted out. Forty-two Members only came in, and one of these was the Lord-Advocate.

AN HON. MEMBER: You moved the count.

*MR. HOZIER said that was the case, and he did so because he disapproved of the Bill very much, and seeing that so little interest was manifested in it by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite—there was not one Member of the Front Opposition Bench present at the time—he could not see why the discussion should go on. He had been a careful listener during the whole of the debate, and he was bound to say he thought the mover, the hon. Member for Argyllshire, advanced a very curious argument for Glasgow being entitled to impose an extra rate on the community. His contention was, in fact, that the Glasgow Corporation managed its affairs in so satisfactory a manner, for it only rated the occupier to the extent of 2s. in the £, that it ought, therefore, to have more money to play with. He never brought forward one single argument in favour of what, after all, was the really monstrous proposal in the Bill, viz., the taxation of existing feu-duties; indeed, no one who had spoken in support of the Bill had argued in favour of it; on the contrary, most of them had absolutely repudiated the idea, and he had reason to believe the hon. Member for the Border Burghs who was to speak later on would express very much the same opinion. But on the other hand, hon. Members opposite would do well to bear in mind that if they did not tax the feu-duties—that was the superior—by this Bill they would tax the feuar or vassal, who would not like such treatment, and would have his own remedy, for he possessed ever so many more votes than the superior. Feu-duties already paid income-tax, and now it was proposed under this Bill to impose on them a municipal duty in addition of 10 per cent.

The feu-duties were quite distinct from ground rents, and he wanted hon. friends from English constituencies to understand that point. Practically no builder in Scotland would accept a ground lease in Scotland, no matter how long that lease might be. He would not even take one for 999 years; he always insisted on having perpetuity. A feu was practically a sale and the feu-duty was nothing more nor less than the interest on a mortgage, and did they wish the interest on mortgages on land to be taxed for local purposes? The man who was called the superior sold the land to the feuar, and the superior practically advanced the whole of the purchase money to him on the security of the land. If he took a mortgage instead there would be no question of taxing him, and therefore, it could not possibly be argued that a tax should be imposed on feu-duties. Moreover, a man who feued a piece of land got a very great advantage over a purchaser if he were, for instance, a builder or a manufacturer with a certain amount of money which he required for building purposes. He had no necessity to pay for the land if he feued it, and all his capital became available for building or expanding his business. On the contrary, if he bought the land, the very utmost he could obtain of the purchase money on mortgage would be three-quarters. Ought the interest on mortgages on land to be taxed for local purposes? It was already taxed for income-tax purposes. There was not a single argument that applied to feu-duties which did not apply to mortgages on land in any locality whatever. Feu-duties were quite different from ground rents. The superior could never get any more than his fixed feu-duty, there was no unearned increment for him, and the taxation of feu-duties would not add one single penny to the assessable value of a town or county. It would only be a readjustment and a general smash up of contracts.

The great proportion, probably two-thirds, of feu-duties were held not by large proprietors, but by men of small means, by churches, by charitable institutions, and by friendly societies. In fact, feu duties were bought and sold at the present moment as securities considered even better than Consols. They constituted a very favourite form of investment. If they taxed the feu-duties, surely it would be a case of the worst possible form of taxation without representation. It would absolutely kill the system of feuing which enabled men with small capital to develop industries. Taxing existing feu-duties would mean robbing, not so much the rich man, who was well able to look after himself, but the churches, charities, trusts, small proprietors, and friendly societies which had invested an enormous amount of money in them in good faith. He, therefore, trusted that those who did not wish to injure, among others, charities, friendly societies, would vote against the Second Reading of this Bill.

Mr. Hozier.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said the last speaker had made a not unnatural, but at the same time a perfectly courteous reference to himself, and he would answer him in exactly the same spirit. Since the critical moment to which reference had been made—the moment of an unsuccessful attempt to count out the House, he had been continuously present and he was consequently surprised to hear the hon. Gentleman declare that the most important clause in the Bill was the seventh clause. To his mind it was the least important clause. It had been almost universally repudiated in the course of the debate.

*MR. HOZIER: It is the very essence of the Bill.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said the seventh clause had reference not to site value at all, not to putting feu-duties under the ban of this new taxation, but it had reference simply and solely to the question after the principle of the Bill had been put into operation. What should be the relief granted to those wholly interested as proprietors. His hon. friend had naturally fastened on the feu-duties.

*MR. HOZIER: And so have the hon. Members opposite.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said he was not prepared to say he did not very largely agree with the views which had been expressed. On the subject of feu-duties he concurred with the opinions expressed in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission, which stated that feu-duties were levied in perpetuity on land and that the interest thus receivable was the interest of a mortgage-holder. No doubt, so far as the pecuniary return went, the superior was in the same position as a mortgager or a bondholder, as they called him in Scotland. The difference was that the superior was not a mere vendor of land. He actually remained possessed of what was known in law as the *dominium*, and that was where the substance of the matter came in. Unfortunately, the superior was not infrequently in the habit of laying down troublesome and onerous conditions, and that was the essential difference that had to be recognised between the interest of a superior and that of a mortgager. If any of those conditions were contravened, if there were a breach of covenant in any respect, the whole of the land and all on the land were forfeited and reverted to this person, who *pro tanto* was very much larger in power than a mortgage-holder. If the superior were treated as a mere mortgage-holder he should have nothing to say, but when he came forward and claimed a controlling and powerful interest in the land, something almost in the nature of a confiscatory character, then he thought Parliament would be right in endeavouring to obtain some hold upon him. Therefore he put away this reference to the readjustment of the rights of the heritable proprietors after this site value was imposed.

The important question was—should they, or should they not, introduce the system of imposing a site value in Scotland? They upon the Opposition side of the House took their stand upon the Report which was signed by Lord Balfour of Burleigh and his colleagues in the minority, and the groundwork of this Bill was contained in the Report of the Royal Commission—and in passing he desired to state that there was one name attached to that Report, the name of the late Lord Kinross, whose *dicta* on matters relating to the incidence of rating on hereditable property in Scotland the House always received not merely with respect but with something almost akin to veneration. It had been said that this was apparently a Glasgow Bill. A good deal had been said about Glasgow in the debate, for what reason he did not know; but, if Glasgow had fathered the Bill, it had done a very good thing indeed. As a matter of fact, however, the groundwork of the Bill was contained in the Report of the Royal Commission. He proposed to state two or three propositions from that Report. The leading proposition laid down in that Report was that—

> "Site and structure, which are now combined for rating purposes, differ so essentially in character that they should be separately valued."

That was the principle of this Bill. The familiar answer to that was that for practical purposes it could not be done. The hon. Member for West Renfrewshire drew a doleful picture of a landlord in distress as to how to fill in the valuation return. He saw no need for distress, seeing that it was done in other civilised countries. The Commissioners in regard to this matter said—

> "Site value and building value have a different and even an opposite character. In many respects it appears to us that a system which treats them exactly alike, as our present system of rating does, is *prima facie* unfair and unwise."

They added on the subject of the practicability of valuation—

> "On the whole we are disposed to think that the valuation of sites sufficiently accurate and not inferior to the present valuation of hereditaments can be made without undue labour and expense."

In their own experience as arbitrators one of the most familiar operations was that of valuing sites, and then, on the top of that, valuing buildings. It was a perfectly easy and in most cases a very successful method of valuation. They had had legislation in that direction. In recent years they had been familiar with subventions from Imperial funds for the relief of taxation on agricultural land. There was very little agricultural land in this country that had no building on it, and consequently it had been found necessary to have separate assessments for lands and buildings. He had before him recently a valuation return for county Cavan in which there were two valuations—the total valuation and the valuation of the land itself, the difference representing the value of the buildings.

That disposed of the proposition that separate valuation was not practicable. It was perfectly easy to ask. Was it, or was it not, a good thing to do? He found the propositions of the Report of the Commission crystallised in the first three or four clauses of this Bill.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford): Are you still dealing with the Minority Report?

MR. THOMAS SHAW: Yes. On the matter of urban local taxation the Report stated—

> "A careful consideration of all the circumstances of urban local taxation leads us to the

conclusion that a moderate rate, proportioned to its value, ought to be imposed as part of any scheme for the readjustment of the burden of local taxation in urban districts."

To his mind there was something far more important than rating reform involved in the matter. There was also a social reform underlying this question which the Commissioners referred to. It was perfectly certain that building was hampered while the present condition of affairs existed, which allowed a rate to be paid on a perfectly trivial valuation, and then when the land was demanded for building the valuation was enormously, nd sometimes a hundred-fold, greater. How was building hampered? The Commissioners dealt very broadly with that matter. They said there was a very strong argument for rating site values on grounds of public policy, regard being had to the effects of the taxation on industry and development. Buildings were a necessity of life, and the present system discouraged building and made houses fewer, worse, and dearer. That was the social point which the House should consider. How did this affect the housing problem and the social prosperity of the community with regard to overcrowding? He held that the first condition of social reform dealing with overcrowding was covered by this Bill. In the Minority Report this language was used—

> "While the rating of site values does concern the public at large as an administrative reform, it is of special importance in connection with the urgent problem of providing house accommodation for the working classes."

He held that the existing system under which land was enabled to pay a perfectly fragmentary and fractional rate, as compared with any estimate based on its true value, was in the highest degree an impediment to public improvements of all kinds. It was a premium on those bad speculators who held up land against building, and thus prevented the community expanding at easy rates under easy circumstances and being in a position to profit by its own industry.

The Bill would also affect the problem of the taxation of unoccupied land. He had at that moment a picture in his mind's eye of a certain burgh in Scotland where in one of the principal streets there was a not inconsiderable block of unoccupied land, and there it stood a vacant site, very valuable, but worth nothing to anyone, because of a squabble between the proprietor and the local authorities, the proprietor refusing in consequence to develop it. That site, and similiar sites which were held up, would be hit by this Bill. There was the case of Rosyth, where the Government had to pay eighty-five years purchase for the land they required. It seemed a perfectly preposterous proposition that the proprietor of any land should be paying rates on one valuation up to the date when the public wanted the land and that then the price should go up enormously against the public and even against the community which had created the value for which it was to pay a second time. There was also the case of the Edinburgh Water Trust. That trust wanted forty-five acres of land. They were paying rates upon £3 5s. per acre. The total value of that land, allowing even for the long term of thirty years purchase, was £4,387; but the Edinburgh Water Trust was not able to acquire this land without paying £20,000, or 136 years purchase. These were incidents which shocked the minds of the Commissioners. The fact that such things could obtain showed that under the present system rates were levied not upon the real but upon a fictitious value. Since Glasgow had beer referred to, he would also give a comparatively recent instance applicable to the Clyde—namely, what the Clyde Trust had to pay for a block of land in the county of Renfrew. There were 110 acres, the annual rent being £240, and the proprietor of it had been paying taxes only on £240. It was essential that for the making of a dock the land should be acquired, and the Clyde Trustees had to pay no less a sum than £104,500, or at the rate of £950 an acre, which was equal to 435 years purchase. He did not envy the Government that declined to apply its mind towards finding some sort of remedy for a state of affairs which was anti-social, anti-progressive, and a hindrance to all municipal enterprise and industry, and made the public buy back the value which it had itself created.

The Commissioners laid down the following broad proposition with regard to a site value rate—

> "It would conduce to placing the urban rating system on a more equitable and thus upon

a sounder basis; it would do something towards lightening the burden in respect of building, and thus something towards solving the difficult and urgent housing problem."

While as to the opportuneness of this reform they said—

> "It is especially opportune at a time when under the schemes they are putting forward the burden of rates in towns will be appreciably relieved."

He was unable to ascertain from his speech whether the hon. Member for Ayrshire approved of a system under which, as he had told the House, the landlord had raised the rental of land as he himself developed it from 7s. to 27s. per yard.

SIR WILLIAM ARROL said it was not the landlord, but the speculator who did that. The landlord, when he came to deal with him, feued the land at a figure at which he only got 4 per cent. The land which the hon. Member had described as of enormous value had been unoccupied for twenty-five years, was let at only a nominal rental as it was occasionally under water, and no one would either build upon it or do anything else with it.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said it turned out, then, that legislation of this kind would not hit the good agricultural landlord but the land speculator who had been bleeding his hon. friend. There could not have been a better justification for the Bill than the interposition of his hon. friend. The community were actually sweated for land that was under water. He never heard of a more indefensible system. He had no desire to confiscate any man's property, therefore he would not propose to interfere with some of the preposterous existing contracts. But what he wished to do was to put a stop as soon as possible to confiscation of the community's earnings which was going on under the present system. Clause 7 was not the important part of the Bill. The really important part was that which provided for the imposition of a special site value rate, and when once that imposition was made it would afford those advantages in the direction of housing and social reform which all would welcome.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton) said he found himself in considerable difficulty in dealing with this Bill, because, although it occupied less than three pages of print, a clause which occupied more than one page of print had been universally repudiated. Moreover, other portions of the Bill were not less important or less open to criticism even by those who, like himself, were not inclined to go so far as some Members on his own side of the House in opposition to the taxation of land values. But he thought this Bill was a very bad example of how the taxation of land values should be applied, and, while sympathising with the tenderness of conscience of the hon. Member for Kincardineshire, he had to confess that his own Parliamentary conscience would not allow him to vote for it.

He did not quite appreciate the illustrations which the hon. Member for the Border Burghs had given, because the Bill, being so framed as to apply entirely to burghs, would affect neither Rosyth nor the ground at Renfrew. The picturesqueness of the hon. Member's illustrations was only equalled by their irrelevance to the question before them. The Member for the Border Burghs had scarcely put the full facts before them in regard to the land at Renfrew. The truth was that it was the proprietor, and not the Clyde Trustees, who gave the value to the land by obtaining an Act of Parliament enabling him to construct docks upon it. The Clyde Trustees then said that he was going to make a competing dock, and that they must, therefore, buy him out, and they acquired the land at the enormously increased value which the proprietor had given to it by converting it from water-logged land into land suitable for a dock. Surely that was miles away from the question they were now considering, which was the taxation of land values in burghs.

The Member for the Border Burghs had referred to the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. But there were some important qualifications even in the Minority Report which the present Bill totally disregarded. In the first place, the Minority Report said that a rate proportioned to the site value alone should be levied for urban improvement purposes in the "larger" burghs. He entirely agreed with what had been said as to the care with which they should regard any statement made in a Report signed by so careful a man as the late Lord Kinross. The word "larger" was not put in without consideration. This Bill, however, applied to every burgh in Scotland—Royal, Parliamentary, or police. In Scotland they had Royal burghs of one or two hundred houses, and three or four hundred inhabitants, and this Bill would apply to every burgh in Scotland, whether big or little. It was, therefore, not correct to say that the Bill proceeded on the lines of the Minority Report, for it was not confined to the larger burghs. The Minority Report also said that the rate on land values should be divided equally between owners and occupiers. The principle of this Bill was that it was all to be put on the owners. Further, the Minority Report stated that the proceeds of the rate should be applied only to purposes which directly added to the value of the site. If this Bill was founded on the principles of the Minority Report, why was not that provision inserted?

Mr. AINSWORTH: I should like to ask if the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to read the Bill a second time, if we accepted the Amendments which he now suggests?

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said he would like to deal with one Bill at a time. But he assured the hon. Member that he would give his most careful consideration to any Bill he might introduce. Apparently his observations had convinced the hon. Member that the present Bill stood badly in need of amendment.

He thought the Bill could have been made very much shorter. Apparently the seventh clause was repudiated by everybody. The first three clauses might have been struck out, except the last line of Clause 3. These clauses provided that the landowner was to apply his mind to make a return as to the value of the site and the value of the building, but the assessor was to fix the value. The assessor would be far better able to fix the value without any return from the proprietor at all. Under the existing law there was an appeal from the assessor to the Court of Session. He did not think there was any appeal given in the Bill, and he did not wonder at that, because the value was to be such value as the assessor would deem reasonable. It was not what the Court thought reasonable. It was not what, in point of fact, was reasonable, but it was what the assessor deemed reasonable.

Mr. THOMAS SHAW: May I call attention to the fourth clause, which particularly provides for the hearing of appeals against valuation.

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said his point was that one might go to the Court of Session, but that the Court would simply say that under the Bill the valuation was to be of such amount as the assessor deemed reasonable. By Clause 5 a maximum of 2s. might be added to the existing rates.

Mr. CALDWELL said there would be an increased revenue of 2s., but the other taxes would be correspondingly less.

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON said that the Bill, on the other hand, would give 2s. more to spend—2s. more for extravagant local authorities to spend. That surely was not a good principle to put in a Bill.

With regard to open spaces, the sixth clause was the worst against open spaces that he had ever seen. The only open spaces that were to be left free from taxation were those which were held and enjoyed by the public under Act of Parliament, or under or by permission of any municipal or local authority. He would take the example of the gardens in Edinburgh between Heriot Row and Queen Street. These gardens were not held under Act of Parliament nor under a municipal or local authority, and by this Bill they would require to be rated as building land. The regulation in the Bill might be very suitable for Glasgow—he did not know—but he thought this would be a most unpopular measure in Edinburgh.

It was said that the Bill would do something to prevent the aggregation of wealth in the shape of unearned increment in certain hands. It would do nothing of the kind. Take the case of a man who had bought his land last year at the full price. This man would be informed that his land would be taxed on the value he had paid for it. If he proceeded to sell, the proposed buyer would say he could not give so much for the land now because there was a 2s. land-value tax on it. In this way the unfortunate present proprietor would lose the whole difference on the capital value produced by the new liability, and in any future transaction it would be discounted. That came uncommonly near confiscation. The loss was not spread over; it was not allowed to run with the land, but was to be put in such a shape that the whole of it would come out of the pocket of the present holder. Where land fluctuated in value, they might have land of the value of 27s., the unhappy holder would have to pay the tax on that basis, and then, after holding it for years, he might, owing to a drop in value, have to sell it at 7s. per yard.

With regard to Clause 7, for which nobody had a word to say, it was astonishing that a Bill, which was said to be a Glasgow Corporation Bill, should come into the House of Commons with one-third of it indefensible. He suggested that on a future occasion a new draftsman should be got to deal with land values. All he had said about the land applied still more to feu-duties. The unhappy proprietor of the feu never got a penny more, no matter what the rise in the land value was.

MR. CALDWELL: Oh, yes! For instance, when a man requires to re-enter, he will have to pay a year's rental to the proprietor, and that is a year's rental at the time he enters.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said it was true that was one of the incidents, but it did not come on very often. The present proprietor would have to pay the tax, and when he came to sell his feu-duty, the buyer would make allowance for the burden on the feu and would only offer a lower price. The result would be that it would all fall on the existing proprietor. He had received the report of a conference held in London last year in reference to this question. He deprecated this Bill being identified with Glasgow. He had the highest respect for the commercial credit and honour of Glasgow, and he should be sorry to think that they were the corporation which would seek to put upon the Statute-book a provision that "any contract which has been or may hereafter be entered into for the purpose of relieving any person entitled to payment of any ground burdens from liability to bear a proportionate share of the payment of land value assessment in accordance with this Act, shall have no force or effect whatever." Even in the crofters' legislation respect was paid to existing contracts. Was it to be said that the keen business men of Glasgow were not quite able to make and carry out their contracts without the interference of this House? He could understand such interference where the parties did not meet on equal terms, but that was not the case with the class of contracts in question here. Those contracts were made by men who understood their business, and they were made upon strictly business principles, and the idea of proposing that existing contracts should be dealt with in that way was altogether out of the question. That clause involved a principle which this House should never allow to pass. He could not find in any clause any principle which, in his judgment, ought to commend the Bill to the House. It did not follow the Report of the Commission, but ran counter to it. However social reforms might be advanced, this was not a measure calculated to do it, and, therefore, he hoped the Bill would not receive a Second Reading, but would be sent back for reconsideration with a view to bringing in some kind of measure of a more equitable character.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 145; Noes, 131. (Division List No. 166.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E. C (S. Andrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harwood, George
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt. Hn. J. (Montrose)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders'fd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Dobbie.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bill, Charles
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Rt. Hn. Sir John C. R.
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley

Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hn. Sir J. C.
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc’r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir R.B(Inv’rn’ssB’ghs
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin &Nairn)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hamilton,Marq.of(L’nd’nderry
Heath, Sir James(StaffordsNW
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield,Brightside
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Captain Herb. Merton
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence,Sir Joseph (Monm’th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,John Grant (Yorks.NR
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Rt.Hn Walter(Bristol, S.
Lowe, Francis William
M‘Arthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
M‘Iver, Sir Lewis(Edinburgh,W
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt’n
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hn. James
Sackville, Col. S. G Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, RtHnJ.Parker(Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley,Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J M‘Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E.(Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn JG. (Oxf’dUniv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col A.C.E (Taunton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W H (Yorks
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart and Mr. Baird.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 143; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 167.)

AYES

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hn.Herbert Henry
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Partrick Geo.Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C (SAndr’wsBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Harwood, George
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt Hn Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Isaac, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P (Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Fadden, Edward
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt.Hon.John(Montrose
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O’Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R.Threshie (Dumfries
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer,Rt.Hn.C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York,E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Dobbie.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt.Sir Alex.F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hn. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hn.Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach,Rt.Hn.SirMichael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bill, Charles
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles,T.Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell,Rt.Hn J.A.(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Rt.Hon. Sir John C.R.
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hon.SirJosephC.
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
FitzGerald, SirRobert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hamilton, Marq.of(L'nd'derry)
Harris, Dr. Fred. R. (Dulwich)
Heath, SirJames(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope,J F.(Sheffield,Brightside)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Captain HerbertMerton
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, SirJoseph(Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks.NR
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N.S.
Long, Rt. Hn.Walter(Bristol,S)
Lowe, Francis William
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,SirLewis(Edinburgh W.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H(Dumfriesshire
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hn. James
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith,RtHnJ Parker(Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley,EdwardJas.(Somerset)
Stewart Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt. Hn J G(Oxf'd Univ.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col.Sir C.EH(Sheffield
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart and Mr. Baird.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Whereupon Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at thirty-five minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 22*nd May*, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway ; London United Tramways (Extension of Time).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to continue sitting in the absence of the Lord Monk Bretton.

Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified ; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified ; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit To-morrow till Two o'clock.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Cloncurry be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*); read, and agreed to.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Clifden be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Monk Bretton ; read, and agreed to.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill ; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill ; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill ; Andover Lighting and Power Bill. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Weaver Navigation Bill [H.L.]; Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Epping Bas Bill. Read 3ª, and passed.

Loughborough Corporation Bill ; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill ; Great Eastern Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Highland Railway Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1ª ; and referred to the Examiners.

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Hill and the Lord Clinton be

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Clifden and the Viscount Ridley; read, and agreed to.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 84.)

PETITION.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petition for early closing of; of public meeting at Carlingcot; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 447. Bermuda. Report for 1904.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the sea and inland fisheries of Ireland, for the years 1902 and 1903. Part II. Scientific investigations.

INDIA (AFGHANISTAN).

Treaty between the British Government and the Amir of Afghanistan, dated 21st March, 1905; with Papers relating thereto.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3377. Japan.

No. 3378. France (Cochin China).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POST OFFICE (POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS): STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS, 1905.

The Post Office Savings Bank Regulations, 1905, dated 15th May, 1905. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to include bribery amongst extradition crimes. Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next. (No. 83.)

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order). A further Amendment moved; objected to; and, on Question, disagreed to. An Amendment moved, and (by leave of the House) withdrawn. An Amendment made. Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next; and to be printed as amended. (No. 85.)

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

BRITISH SHIPPING TRADE—FOREIGN RESERVATIONS AND ENCROACHMENTS.

LORD MUSKERRY rose "To call attention to the action of foreign maritime Powers in closing certain spheres of trade in which British ships have hitherto been engaged, with particular reference to the Philippines, Canary Islands, and the Marshall Islands trades; to ask whether any further information can be afforded regarding the negotiations which have passed between His Majesty's Government and the United States, German, and Spanish Governments on the matter; whether, if the position is still adverse to British ships, any steps are contemplated in protecting them from unfair competition; whether it is a fact that His Majesty's Government have reserved the water frontage of the British concession at Hankau to British ships, and, if so, whether the reports are correct that the restriction is evaded by foreigners registering their vessels as British vessels under the Companies Act in Hong-Kong."

He said: My Lords, though the notice I have given appears to be a comprehensive one, I shall endeavour to confine myself as closely as possible to the points at ssue. My object in calling your Lordships' attention to these several matters and asking for further information regarding them is to show that foreigners are closing the door to our greatest industry whilst the Government, up till the other day at all events, have taken no steps to prevent it except in one case which I will mention later on. I am aware that I may seem to be bordering upon a thorny and much-debated subject, but I contend that this question of our merchant shipping should not be looked on either from a free-trade or protectionist point of view. The question of free trade or protection is never brought forward in connection with the Royal Navy or the Army. As the Militia is the reserve of the Army, so is the merchant navy the reserve, and the only reserve, of the Royal Navy. On the merchant navy you depend for your food supplies, and for the transport of troops and munitions of war; and our merchant ships are the most material of the bonds that bind the Empire together. Our great shipping lines I may liken to the arteries running from the heart of the Empire to all our Colonies. The merchant navy is financed by private individuals, but nevertheless it is a national service of the greatest importance, and it is the duty of the Government to encourage and protect it.

It is ridiculous to suppose that whilst we permit and encourage the foreigner to compete with us at advantageous terms, we should also allow him to debar, under any consideration whatever, any competition of ours in the countries over which he has dominion. The foreign shipowner is at present playing with us that interesting game known as "Heads I win, tails you lose." Whilst the foreigner is free to trade wherever he pleases, I find from the Report of the Steamships Subsidies Committee that British ships are not allowed to participate in the coasting trade of the following maritime countries:—Belgium, France, Russia, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Brazil, the United States, Egypt, and others.

When I brought this subject of the coastal trade before your Lordships last year I was replied to by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and on June 28th, some days afterwards, I received the following letter from Messrs. Burt, Boulton & Haywood, Limited, of Cannon Street, E.C., viz.—

"My Lord,—In reply to a question of yours asked in the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne is reported in *The Times* of Tuesday, June 14th, to have replied as follows:—'Out of the seven Powers which do a large amount of coasting trade, four—Germany, Denmark, Holland, and Portugal—admit our vessels freely to their coasting trade. France does the same with the exception of Algerian trade, which is specially reserved.' We felt sure at the time that this reply was reported that it was not entirely accurate, and that Lord Lansdowne had been misinformed, but, to make sure, we made a direct inquiry of the *Ministere de Commerce* in Paris, through our Paris house, and received the positive assurance that affairs are exactly as they have been for many years past in France, and that foreign vessels are prohibited from coasting between French ports proper, and between French ports and Algerian ports and *vice versa*. No doubt others will have written to you pointing out the discrepancy between Lord Lansdowne's statement, as reported, and the facts, but you would be doing great service to British shipping if you would kindly follow up the matter further, and endeavour to obtain some public correction from Lord Lansdowne of the error into which he has been led.

Yours faithfully,

Burt, Boulton & Haywood, Limited.

(*Signed*) HAROLD BOULTON, *Director*."

To such an absurd and unfair pitch has this reservation of the coastal trade got, that in Russia it includes a voyage from the Black Sea to St. Petersburg. Here a once lucrative British trade has been shut out by one fell swoop. Russia also declares it coastal trade from St. Petersburg or any Russian port to Vladivostock. Again, a British ship cannot—or rather, is not allowed to—carry a cargo from New York to San Francisco, or from any American port to Honolulu, for in the eyes of the United States this is a coasting voyage. Therefore, one of our ships seeking a cargo in New York has the whole of the United States sea-board and the Sandwich Islands wiped off her chart.

The latest move of the United States is that, on the 1st of July of next year, the Philippines are to be included in the same category; thus British ships after that date may say good-bye to another trade which has been practically theirs up till now. At the recent annual meeting of the Sunderland Shipowners' Society, the chairman said—

> "Unfortunately the United States were closing their Philippine trade at the end of July of next year. That was a matter which affected them very keenly, as it employed a large amount of tonnage."

We cannot but sympathise with our shipowners when we see their limits of trade becoming more and more restricted, whilst at the same time the foreign competition they have to contend with is growing keener and stronger every day. Surely, my Lords, it is full time for His Majesty's Government to take action in this matter. Though in a comparative sense it does not appear to be of much magnitude, it is another encroachment on our shipping trade that the Spanish Government have decided to reserve to Spanish ships the trade between the different islands of the Canaries. The present trade, as it is carried on, provides a living for certain British owners, captains, officers, and men who shortly will perforce require to look elsewhere for the employment of which they have been deprived by foreigners. We found it so when large British lines trading from Singapore and Shanghai were sold to foreigners that the British captains and officers were displaced at the earliest possible time. I understand that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has informed the Merchant Service Guild that this question of the reservation of the Canary Islands trade is engaging the attention of His Majesty's Government—I hope with better success than that which attended their negotiations anent the Philippine Islands trade.

With regard to the action of the Germans in freezing out British trade with the Marshall and Caroline groups of Islands in the Pacific, this was lately brought before your Lordships' House by my noble friend the Earl of Jersey, and the noble Marquess the Foreign Minister a short time ago told your Lordships the nature of the communication he had received from the German Government. I see that the Federal Prime Minister took a very practical and forcible view of the situation in saying that if the Imperial Government obtained no redress for them they would retaliate by severely penalising German trade with Australia. I cannot help thinking that this statement of the Federal Prime Minister had some influence on the terms of the reply given by Germany to the noble Marquess.

The final, and what I consider the most important, matter to which, with your permission, I would allude is that, if reports are correct, the British Government have already taken steps in protecting British trade from the opposition of the foreigner. When on previous occasions I have advocated steps of the kind in this House the replies I have received have proved to be most unsatisfactory. But it is deeds, not words, which tell, and it affords me ample satisfaction when I hear that His Majesty's Government carry into practical effect that which in this House they have poured cold water upon. In the year 1861 the British Government secured from the Chinese the perpetual lease of a piece of land some 2,750 feet in length by 1,250 feet in breadth, situated on the left bank of the Yangtze, about fifty yards below the native city of Hankau. On this piece of land an important and prosperous trade-centre has been built up, and is known as the British concession at Hankau. As was to be expected, foreign competition became keener and keener until, finally, the George McBain line of steamers, under the British flag, and having certain important rights in the concession, was sold to the largest and most powerful of the Japanese shipping companies—the Nippon Yusen Kaisha. Thinking that the British Government would maintain their usual *non possumus* attitude, they naturally concluded that the rights and privileges of Mr. George McBain as a British subject in the British concession at Hankau would accrue to them as part of the goodwill of the business they had bought. The *bona fide* British shipowners trading to the concession took alarm, however, and saw that their interests would in all probability suffer very seriously. An appeal was made to the British Government, who, it appears, have decided to reserve the sites at this British concession to British national shipping.

I am relying on *The Times* correspondent at Shanghai for most of my details. Owing to the presence of foreign voters on the concession at Hankau it is said that the Foreign Office have supplemented their decision by laying it down that in case of necessity British votes alone should be considered. This step, if it has actually been taken by the Government, is of far-reaching importance. The magnitude of it can hardly be realised at the moment, for it is, I think I am right in saying, the first practical and drastic method they have adopted in preventing foreign encroachment on the rightful preserves of the British shipping trade. If, as I hope to hear, my statements are in accord with fact, I would also like to know whether the decision of the Government has been checkmated by the Japanese company referred to. So far as can be gathered, this company have now, at Hong-Kong, registered their vessels as British ships. It is said that this is in accordance with the law, although a glance at the composition of the company shows that two clerks of the Japanese company are the principal shareholders, and that the only difference is the flag the ships fly. I may say that the Japanese are by no means the only offenders in this respect.

The reports of *The Times* correspondent at Shanghai are so detailed and circumstantial as to warrant credence being given to them. I do not suppose that His Majesty's Government are going to allow foreigners, under the guise of Britishers, to circumvent a decision they have arrived at, and no doubt the noble Marquess representing the Foreign Office can give satisfactory assurances on this point. I hope your Lordships will not think I have unduly trespassed upon your indulgence. Though we are yet paramount as a shipping Power we are too apt to forget how keen, how determined, and sometimes how unscrupulous foreign competition has become. It behoves us to meet it before it overwhelms us, for when our shipping trade is threatened it is an attempt not only to cripple our greatest industry, but to strike a blow at the foundations of the British Empire. I beg to put the Questions standing in my name.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I shall certainly not gainsay what has fallen from the noble Lord as to the importance of our merchant service, of whose interests he has shown himself a vigilant and assiduous advocate. Nor shall I contradict him when he tells your Lordships that he regards as extremely unfair to this country the existing arrangements under which, while the coasting trade of Great Britain and her dependencies is freely open to the shipping of other countries, the coastal trade of some at all events of those countries is entirely closed against British shipping. I am afraid, too, that the noble Lord is not inaccurate when he says that the tendency to impose this restriction is an increasing tendency, and it is, as he truly said, aggravated by the fact that, when speaking of coasting trade, we refer, not only to coasting trade in the narrower sense of the word—trade between one portion and another of the United Kingdom—but also to that much more extensive trade passing between one national port and another national port, such, for instance, as the trade carried by vessels plying between a Black Sea port and St. Petersburg.

The noble Lord left us to infer the remedy which he would propose in order to combat this condition of things. I would venture to remind your Lordships that, so long as nothing is done by foreign Powers to infringe the treaty rights of this country, we have no title to complain if a foreign Power chooses to restrict its coasting trade, or any other part of its trade, to its own subjects. All we can do is to consider whether it is worth our while to use pressure, and, if so, to what extent, in order to bring about a mitigation of our grievances.

It is sometimes suggested, and I rather think that that is virtually the suggestion of the noble Lord, that we should follow the example of other countries and reserve entirely to our own shipping the coasting trade of Great Britain and her dependencies. But that is not a remedy to which we could light-heartedly resort. It would carry us too far, for of the Powers which participate largely in this coasting business four, at any rate, admit us to their coasting trade. In regard to a fifth Power, France, I will make a point of inquiring very carefully into the matter after what the noble Lord has said, but I am under the impression that France allows British vessels to participate in her coasting trade except that which passes between French ports and ports of the Algerian provinces. Then, if we were to debar foreigners from participation in our coasting traffic, we should diminish, or perhaps lose entirely, that extremely valuable *entrepôt* trade in which this country has a large interest. It must be remembered that many foreign vessels coming to our ports bring us their merchandise for reshipment to some other country, and it would certainly be a misfortune if that branch of our business were to be taken away from us. Then it is suggested that we might deny our coasting trade to those countries which do not admit us to theirs. But there we are met with a formidable difficulty—namely, that the countries which most completely exclude us from their coasting trade are precisely the countries which take the smallest part in our coasting trade. The Powers which I have in my mind are the United States and Russia.

LORD MUSKERRY: I included intercoastal colonial trade.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am quite aware of that, but I do not think it affects the argument I am using. Although there is the inequality which I have admitted, it cannot be said that at this moment, at all events, foreign countries monopolise any considerable share of our coasting business. The figures are rather striking. I believe I gave them to your Lordships last year, but I do not hesitate to repeat them. Of the smaller coasting trade around our shores no less than 99 per cent. is in the hands of British shipping, while of the larger Imperial coasting trade no less than 88 per cent. is done by British shipping and only 12 per cent. by foreign vessels. Another suggestion is that we should, at any rate, insist that such foreign vessels as ply to British ports should be compelled to comply with those regulations and legislative enactments by which our own shipping is bound. There is at this moment, certainly, an inconsistency, and a most inequitable inconsistency, in allowing, say, a Norwegian timber ship to come to a British port without complying with those extremely salutary regulations of which the noble Lord has often spoken in this House and which are, to a certain extent, a burden on the shipping of this country. A Committee of the House of Commons was appointed last session to deal with this matter. I believe that the time at their disposal was not found sufficient to enable them to arrive at a conclusion, and it has been lately announced that the Committee is to be reappointed this year. I am sure we must all hope that they will see their way to making practical and satisfactory recommendations on this important branch of the subject.

The particular cases which the noble Lord cited illustrate very fairly the great difficulty of dealing with this problem. In the first instance there is the case of the Philippines. When the United States made peace with Spain they undertook that for ten years Spanish shipping should have equal treatment with United States shipping so far as the trade with the Philippines was concerned. Last year a Bill passed the United States Legislature under which all foreign shipping, except Spanish, is excluded from trade with the Philippines, that trade being reserved as coastal trade by the United States Government. The Act in question will not come into operation until 1906. When we became aware of this we put in a claim in favour of our shipping, urging that, as we were entitled to most-favoured-nation treatment at the hands of the United States Government, we might claim the same treatment for our shipping that the United States Government had bound themselves to accord for ten years to Spanish shipping. We were met with a reply, perhaps not entirely unexpected, which goes to show that the interpretation placed by the United States Government upon most-favoured-nation treatment differs materially from our interpretation. The United States Government hold, and, I believe, have held for some time, that the existence of an international compact, under which

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

they are bound to give most-favoured-nation treatment to any particular Power does not preclude them from making by treaty with another Power for value received special arrangements entitling that other Power to exceptional privileges or advantages. The United States Government hold that in this case their arrangement with regard to trade with the Philippines is such a special arrangement, and is not of a kind which entitles other nations to claim equal treatment on the ground that they have most-favoured-nation clauses with the United States. That is how the matter stands, and I am sorry to say that I do not see much prospect of inducing the United States Government to abandon that view. But I would ask the noble Lord whether it is not possible to exaggerate the dimensions of the difficulty which has arisen. This special arrangement between the United States and Spain runs for ten years from the date when it was made. It will, therefore, expire in 1908 or in the beginning of 1909, but the trade of the Philippines will only begin to be treated as coastal trade and reserved to the United States in 1906. We are, therefore, only discussing a trade which is, after all, not of first-rate importance, and which, in any circumstances, could be withdrawn from us after we had enjoyed it for the space of about two years; for I need not say that when the special arrangement between the United States and Spain comes to an end, we shall no longer be able to claim most-favoured-nation treatment.

The second case referred to by the noble Lord was that of the Canaries. I find that in November of last year it was declared under Royal decree by the Spanish Government that trade between the different ports of those islands should henceforth be treated as coastal trade. When that decision became known our representative called attention to the fact that considerable British interests were involved—interests which had grown up under the shelter of previous decrees. I do not know whether it was owing to this representation, but it was, in fact, decided that the new decree should not come into operation until this year. In the meantime, our representations were renewed; but I am sorry to say, in this case also, we received a distinct intimation that, in the opinion of the Spanish Government, it is expected, for the protection of their mercantile marine and in accordance with the rules of the Spanish Customs reserving coastal trade for the national flag, that foreign shipping should not be admitted to the trade of these islands. There the matter remains, and I do not, as at present advised, see what means His Majesty's Government have of inducing the Spanish Government to take a different view.

In regard to the Marshall Islands, I made a statement in your Lordships' House the other evening, and I do not know that it is necessary for me to add to what I then said. I was able to tell the House that the German Government freely recognised that the Convention of 1896 entitled British and German shipping to absolute equality of treatment in that part of the ocean, and I was able to say that the particular concession granted to the Jaluit Company was about to be cancelled by the German Government. I do not think I need add anything to that.

I now pass to the last case mentioned by the noble Lord—the case of the wharves at Hankau. The story, stated briefly, is this. In the British concession at Hankau there is a small amount of wharfage which was reserved by this country—I believe the length of it is only sufficient to accommodate four hulks at one and the same time. There has been a considerable amount of dispute with regard to the conditions under which this wharfage was to be used. The old regulations were, I am bound to say, of a very unsatisfactory character. A meeting of the persons renting land in the concession used to be held, a good many of whom were not British subjects; they were able to recommend any applicant for the privilege of making use of this wharfage, and if their recommendation seemed to our Consul-General an improper one he was able to put a veto upon it; but if he did so the result was to prevent the particular candidate recommended by the land-renters from getting his wharf; but it did not enable the Consul-General to give it to anybody else. Therefore the result used to be a deadlock and the wharfage might remain vacant and useless. New regulations have been drafted by our Minister under which the British Consul-General will be in a position to notify to the municipal council his approval of any particular application for wharfage, and that approval will be obligatory upon the council. As an alternative mode of procedure, it is provided that the land-renters may also recommend an applicant, but there is an appeal to the Consul-General, whose decision is final, and instructions have been given which is to make it perfectly clear that a preference be given. The noble Lord seemed to be apprehensive that these new rules would be eluded by bogus registrations, under the shelter of which people who were not really British subjects would appear in the guise of British subjects and claim rights accordingly. That point, I think has been sufficiently provided for in the instructions, because it has been laid down that the Consul-General is to give a preference to British steamers and that, in deciding between one applicant and another, he is to have regard to the ownership and agency of the line and to decide which applicant most truly represents British interests. I do not think, therefore, that there is any prospect of the new regulations being evaded. In regard to the unsatisfactoriness of the state of things under which we do not at present obtain on the coasts of other countries the privileges which we afford to others, I am afraid that I am unable to give the noble Lord much comfort. But I can assure him that in all these cases, and particularly as regards Hankau, we have done all that is possible to secure due regard to British interests.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order).

Lord HENEAGE moved an Amendment to Clause 3, altering the time in which it was necessary to give notice of the accident from "six" to "nine" days. He thought six days an adequate period in towns, but contended that in regard to rural employment a longer time should be allowed after the happening of the accident in which to give the notice. He quoted several instances to show the necessity of extending the period if labouring men in remote country districts, who might not call a doctor in until several days after the accident, were to have the benefit of the Act.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 37, to leave out the word 'six' and insert the word 'nine.'"—(*Lord Heneage.*)

Lord BELPER reminded the House that when this matter was considered by the Committee very strong evidence was put before them in favour of fixing a much shorter period than six days. Three days were suggested as ample time for the notice, especially as the period could be extended, where necessary, by application to the County Court. Indeed, some who gave evidence before the Committee were pressing the Government to make the time even shorter than three days. The period in the Bill—six days—was suggested by the Committee and accepted as a compromise, and in view of the safeguard giving a County Court power to extend the period, he questioned the wisdom of raising the point now when they had a certain prospect before them, if they did so, of the matter being reopened in another place in the other direction. It was not only in the interest of the employer but also in the interest of the workmen that the notice should be given as early as possible, so that the injury could be medically attended to without delay, and he hoped the compromise which had been come to would be allowed to stand. There was not the slightest doubt that if a case arose in which a labourer in a country district had failed, through ignorance or any other cause, to give the notice in the necessary time the Court would take a reasonable view of the matter and allow the claim for compensation to proceed. Personally, he could not see any difficulty in the injured labourer giving notice of the accident before he left the farm, even though the injury might not appear to be of so serious a nature as to be likely to lead to a claim being made. If, in the future, it was proved that in the case of agricultural labourers the period in which the notice had to be given should be a longer one, that would be a fair case for amending the law; but at present, in view of the careful attention given to the matter by the Committee and the fact that the period of six days was agreed upon by them as a compromise, His Majesty's Government were obliged to adhere to the period in the Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON said that one of the principal arguments of Lord Belper appeared to be that if Lord Heneage's Amendment was adopted the question would be sure to be raised again in the House of Commons and difficulties would arise there. He (Lord Ripon) could assure the noble Lord that, if the Amendment was not made, the question would undoubtedly be raised in the House of Commons, and probably the view of the noble Lord (Lord Belper) would not be upheld by that Assembly. The noble Lord had declared that, in his opinion, it would be quite convenient for an agricultural labourer who was injured on a farm to give his notice before leaving the farm. But was that reasonable? It appeared to him (Lord Ripon) that the period of six days, shortened as it probably would be in most cases by the intervention of Sunday, was undoubtedly too short; and in the interests of working men he had hoped the Government would have given way and accepted the reasonable Amendment moved by Lord Heneage. The view of those who desired to limit the period to three days was so unjust that it was not entitled to any consideration at all.

On Question, Amendment negatived.

VISCOUNT CROSS said there never were any Acts of Parliament which had given rise to so much litigation and expense as the Workmen's Compensation Acts. He did not believe there was a Judge on the Bench who had not had occasion to grumble at the time he had had to spend in construing those Acts. This all arose in his opinion, from the practice that had been growing up of legislating by reference—an evil which was perpetuated in the present Bill. There was hardly a section of the Workmen's Compensation Acts which was not touched by this Bill, and the result would be that the difficulties of construction would be greater than ever. He had proposed to move that the principal Act and the Act of 1900 should be printed as a schedule to this Act, with the additions, omissions, and substitutions required by this Act; but on consideration he thought that a method of dealing with the matter of which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had given notice would meet the case. It was provided in the Bill that the Act should come into operation on January 1st, 1906, except as regards certain parts of it, and as the Act was to come into operation at different times he thought there might be a question as to how soon it might be possible to print the Act as suggested in the Amendment standing in the name of the Lord Chancellor.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY) reminded their Lordships that the greater tendency in recent years to make reference to Acts of Parliament relating to each other had been adopted from the necessity of minimising opportunities of obstruction, for every additional line gave opportunities for further opposition. He did not deny that this legislation by reference was a very great evil, and was not satisfactory either to the Legislature or to the Judges who had to construe it. But they had to do the best they could. He was himself chairman of the Statute Law Revision Committee, which succeeded in reducing the statutes at large from 100 volumes to ten. That result was of very great advantage to the community, but it was discovered that they were proceeding too quickly and it became the practice to obstruct these consolidating statutes, and they were thrown overboard at the end of the session. The consequence was that for the last ten years the Committee had not met again, for he had never asked the Judges and the other members to proceed further with their thankless and laborious task.

His Amendment was to omit Sub-section 4 of Clause 23, which provided that any copy of the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900—

> "Printed after the passing of this Act by authority of His Majesty, may be printed with the additions, omissions, and substitutions required by this Act."

And to substitute for it a sub-section directing the Clerk of the Parliaments to prepare and certify a copy of the principal Act and of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900—

> "With the omission of the parts expressly repealed by this Act and with the sections and sub-sections numbered in manner directed by this Act."

for His Majesty's printer. The words which he proposed to insert were in the Act of 1885, in which for the first time this practice was introduced, but for some reason or other in later years the certificate of the Clerk of Parliaments had been left out. But it must be understood that this was to be done solely for the convenience of those interested, such as workmen and lawyers; and that authority was to lie solely in the Act as it was passed by Parliament and printed in the form in which it was passed among the Acts of Parliament of the session.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 23, page 16, to leave out Sub-section (4), and to insert the following new sub-sections: '(4) Every enactment and word of this Act which is expressed to be substituted for or added to any portion of the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, shall form part of those Acts respectively in the place assigned to it by this Act, and those Acts, and all Acts, including this Act, which refer thereto shall, after the commencement of and subject to the savings contained in this Act, be construed as if the said enactment or word had been originally enacted in the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, as the case may be, in the place so assigned, and where it is substituted for another enactment or word, had been so enacted in lieu of that enactment or word; and the expression 'this Act' as used in the principal Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, or this Act, shall be construed accordingly. '(5) A copy of the principal Act and of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, with every such enactment and word inserted in the place so assigned, and with the omission of the parts expressly repealed by this Act, and with the sections and sub-sections numbered in manner directed by this Act, shall be prepared and certified by the Clerk of the Parliaments, and deposited with the Rolls of Parliament; His Majesty's printer shall print in accordance with the copy so certified all copies of the principal Act and of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1900, which are printed after the commencement of this Act.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD said he had no objection to the Amendment, as it was intended altogether for convenience and as without it the amended Act as arranged by the printer, without any certificate from the Clerk of the Parliaments, would have been the actual enactment. He had been more successful than he anticipated, for his action in calling attention to this matter had led to an Amendment being placed on the Paper by Lord Cross as well as by his noble and learned friend the Lord Chancellor. He would have been glad to accept either of the remedies proposed, but of the two he preferred the Amendment which had just been moved by the Lord Chancellor. The point he desired to emphasise was that the law of the land must be the Act itself as it was passed by Parliament.

LORD THRING said the tendency of legislation by reference was to make the law a sort of Chinese puzzle. He did not, however, desire to express any opinion as to the Amendment moved by the noble and learned Lord. But he doubted whether it clearly expressed what was undoubtedly intended—namely, that the text of the Act was to be the text as passed by Parliament.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next; and to be printed as amended [No. 85].

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, this Bill proposes to give an extension of the power of appeal to your Lordships' House from the Court of Appeal in

Ireland. Important proceedings occasionally come before the Court of Appeal in Ireland, taken by way of certiorari, mandamus, quo warranto, or prohibition, valuation and rating appeals and the parties are unable under the provisions of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877, to take them by way of final appeal to your Lordships' House. This Bill proposes to extend the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords and make it exercisable in the case of any decision, judgment, decree, or order of the Court of Appeal in Ireland in any proceedings such as those to which I have referred. The Bill will be a very useful one and I hope your Lordships will accord it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Ashbourne*).

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 22*nd May*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill; London Government Scheme (London and Middlesex) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

East Cowes Gas Bill [Lords]; Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords]. McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords]; read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

London and North Western Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

North Eastern Railway Bill; North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Canals Bill. Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Canals Bill with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Sir John Brunner.*)

Bolton Corporation Bill. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 31st May, and to be printed. [Bill 226.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill; Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill, without Amendment.

Wrexham Gas Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the election of County Councillors." [Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the law relating to the arrangement of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs." [Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [Lords.]

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Middlesbrough, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Westminster, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Atherton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (CHILDREN) BILL.

Petition from Westminster, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (AFGHANISTAN).

Copy presented, of Treaty between the British Government and the Amir of Afghanistan, dated 21st March, 1905, with Papers relating thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of the Post Office Savings Bank Regulations, 1905, dated 15th May, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1902–3.

Part II. Scientific Investigations [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3377 and 3378 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS (SOLDIERS AND SAILORS).

Return ordered, "showing the number of Appointments as permanent messengers in the several Government Offices, or in the Palace of Westminster, and as park-keepers or gardeners under the Office of Works, which became vacant between the 1st day of April, 1904, and the 31st day of March, 1905, and the number of persons appointed to fill such posts who had served previously in His Majesty's Army or Navy, in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committees of 1876–7 and of 1894–5; and showing, further, how many were given employment under the Post Office."—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Discharges at Sheerness Dockyard—Stopping of Overtime Work.

Mr. JOHN HOWARD (Kent, Faversham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that overtime is being worked by the very class of men employed at Sheerness Dockyard who are being discharged; and whether, in view of the amount of work in hand at the present time, and likely to be undertaken in Sheerness Dockyard, he will consider the advisability, with a view to retaining men who are being discharged, and who are given as likely to be discharged, of stopping overtime for the present.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) No overtime is being worked by the classes of men from whom discharges are being made at Sheerness Dockyard, except on one small special job, on which it is impossible to put more men, and which must be completed by the end of the month. A certain amount of overtime is necessary each week, but this is of such a character as is essential for the economical working of the yard, *e.g.*, lighting fires and furnaces before bell-ringing, pumping water, making good any breakdown to shop machinery, etc. This class of work is performed by men specially selected for the purpose. Such overtime, therefore, being normal, does not affect the number of discharges, which were calculated after making allowance for overtime of the nature stated and wastage due to death, superannuation, etc. The amount of work now in hand at Sheerness and in prospect for the next few months has led to the discharges being increased from twelve to twenty per week for the present, in order that the men borne on the books may be remuneratively employed.

Discharges at Sheerness Dockyard.

Mr. JOHN HOWARD: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can give approximately the number of discharges contemplated by the Admiralty amongst the men employed in Sheerness Dockyard from 22nd May, 1905, to the end of the financial year, and the rate at which these discharges are to be effected; also whether he can state the number of discharges that have taken place in Sheerness Dockyard from 1st January, 1905, to 22nd May, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The number of discharges contemplated from the 22nd May to the end of the financial year is 540. The rate of discharge, which was at first twelve per week, has recently been increased to twenty per week. The total number of discharges between the 1st January, 1905, and the 22nd May is 190, including men discharged at their own request and on superannuation.

Findings of the International Labour Conference.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the conclusions come to by the recent International Labour Conference, on which His Majesty's Government were represented, will be laid before Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The conference has only just finished its meetings, and I have not yet had time to consider its conclusions, so I am not yet prepared to answer the right hon. Baronet's Question. I hope, however, to do so very shortly.

Errors in Sectoring of Lights on the Irish Coast.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the errors in the sectoring of the Roancarrig Light, Berehaven, as shown by its actual bearings when compared with the information given in the Admiralty Chart and List of Lights, have yet been rectified; and, if so, for how long a time had the errors existed; whether the sectoring of South Arran Light was rectified in 1903, whether it is now correct, and for how long the previous error had existed; and will he explain why the light at Oyster Island, as shown in the Admiralty Lists of Lights, is described as showing from South 29 degrees East through East to South 21 degrees East, a sector of 352 degrees, instead of from South 29 degrees East through South to 21 degrees East, a sector of 8 degrees; and who is responsible for the error; for what reason the Imogene Buoy is coloured red and the Rosebeg Buoy coloured black, both buoys being on the same side of their respective channels.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that they are not aware of any errors in the sectoring of Roancarrig Light as shown by its actual bearings when compared with the information given in the Admiralty Chart and List of Lights. They state, however, that with the improved new character of light which will shortly be exhibited at this station, an observer will notice in clear weather when close to the light that the cuts are more sharply defined than with the existing light. As regards South Arran Light, which is cut by the land, I am informed that it was not affected by the painting of the screen part of the lantern in 1903, and that the information about the light given in the Admiralty publications is practically correct. The Commissioners inform me that it escaped their attention, when the Notice to Mariners in regard to the Oyster Island Light was issued, that the wording of it conveyed the impression that the white arc was visible over 352 degrees instead of 8 degrees. They will take steps for this to be corrected in the next issue of the List of Lights, and the responsible authority will be asked to consider whether the case is one in which a Notice to Mariners should be issued in the meanwhile. As regards the two buoys mentioned in the latter part of the Question, the Commissioners state that the Imogene Buoy, being the starboard landmark for a danger in the approach to Dundalk Harbour, is coloured red, while the Rosebeg is coloured black as it is considered safer for shipping to treat this latter buoy as the seamark for a port land danger to vessels passing up channel rather than as starboard landmark of a danger in the approach to the Port of Dublin.

Cheap Mattresses—Insanitary Flock.

Mr. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the insanitary condition of certain cheaper kinds of flock used in the manufacture of cheap mattresses; and whether he will take steps, by legislation or otherwise, for the prevention of the spread of infectious disease arising from the use of insanitary and unwashed materials.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) My attention has been drawn to the sale and use of unwashed flock for bedding and other purposes. The compulsory cleansing of the materials referred to could not be generally secured under the existing law. The point has been noted for consideration, but I cannot at present hold out any prospect of legislation on the subject.

Children in Workhouses and Workhouse Infirmaries.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of children at present in the Metropolitan workhouses and workhouse infirmaries and in provincial workhouses and workhouse infirmaries respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) On the 1st January, 1905, the latest date for which information is available, the numbers of pauper children relieved in workhouses and workhouse infirmaries in England and Wales were as follows:—

	Number of children chargeable to Poor Law unions in London.	Number of children chargeable to Poor Law unions outside London.	Total.
(A) Not including insane and idiots:—			
1. In workhouses, otherwise than in infirm wards - - - -	1,090	14,638	15.728
2. In infirm wards or infirmaries - - -	1,878	4,069	5,947
(B) Insane and idiots in workhouses*	12	288	300
	2,980	18,995	21,975

* There were also 736 children in the Imbecile Asylums belonging to the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylum District.

Boarded-out Poor Law Children.

MR. MELVILLE (Stockport): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of Poor Law children at present boarded-out beyond and within the union respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) On the 1st January, 1905, the numbers of pauper children in England and Wales who were boarded-out beyond the union and within the union were 1,806 and 6,814, respectively. This is the latest information which is at present available.

Children Emigrated to Canada by Boards of Guardians.

MR. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of children emigrated to Canada by boards of guardians during 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) During the year 1904 the Local Government Board issued Orders authorising expenditure by boards of guardians in respect of the emigration to Canada of 374 children.

Officials in Edinburgh Post Office over the Regulation Age.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the number of officials in the Edinburgh telegraph staff who have reached the age for retirement laid down in the Civil Service regulations.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Under the Order in Council of 15th August, 1890, retirement is compulsory for every officer on attaining sixty-five years of age. No officer on the telegraph staff at Edinburgh has reached that age.

Auxiliary Rural Postmen entitled to qualify as Rural Postmen.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether auxiliary rural postmen who perform five hours duty daily, or less, and who are beyond the age limit, are eligible to qualify for appointment as rural postmen under any regulations now in force; and, if such privilege does exist, was it in operation in 1890–91.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The class of rural postmen is recruited alternately from ex-soldiers or ex-sailors and from boy messengers who pass through the assistant postmen's class. Auxiliary postmen as such have no claim to appointment as rural postmen, but they are occasionally appointed under exceptional circumstances. A man who is beyond the age limit is not, therefore, excluded from appointment, if he was within that limit when he was first employed by the Post Office and has rendered continuous service since that time. These conditions were in operation in 1890–1.

Appointment of Male Learners to Dublin Post Office.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General, with reference to the examination for male learners in February, 1904, whether he can state how many of the eleven successful candidates have since been appointed, what is the cause of the delay in appointing the remainder, and when they are likely to be called in.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I presume that the hon. Member refers to the examination for male learners in the Dublin Office. If this be so none of these candidates have yet been appointed owing to the decrease in telegraph work and to a smaller number of vacancies on the class of sorting clerks and telegraphists having occurred than was anticipated. It is impossible to say when they will receive appointments, since it depends upon the occurrence of vacancies.

Irish Portal Veterinary Service Staff—Increased Pay for Back Service.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, in connection with the recent establishment of the Irish Portal Veterinary Service, which was not proposed to have retrospective effect, whether he can state if the Treasury intend to accede to the request of the inspectors and of the Department of Agriculture that back service with increased pay should be granted.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) This matter is still under the consideration of the Treasury.

School Attendance of Children—Obligation of Parents to send Medical Certificate in cases of Absence.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, with a view to avoid the hardship and expense caused to working people by the practice of school attendance officers of making a rule that parents must either send every child to school or get a doctor's certificate, and in view of the cases of death of children sent to school, when ill, because the parents could not afford to obtain such a certificate, he will issue instructions to county councils showing that it rests entirely with the school attendance committees to decide on the merits of each case, and as to whether they will send a particular case to be prosecuted before a magistrate or not.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) School attendance officers have no power to make rules on the subject referred to. Their practice should be governed by such directions as they may receive from the local education authority, who have full powers to deal with individual cases on their merits and to give such general instructions as to the evidence required for non-attendance at school as will promote the convenience of all parties concerned. The justice of the peace may also accept other evidence than a medical certificate as an excuse for non-attendance on the ground of illness. It seems hardly necessary for the Board to issue instructions on the subject.

Evasions of the Medical and Dentists Act by Limited Companies.

SIR JOHN TUKE (Edinburgh and St. Andrews' Universities): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received an opinion from the Law Officers of the Crown concerning evasions of the Medical Acts and of the Dentist's Act under the provisions of the Companies Acts; and, if so, whether he will communicate it to the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The Board of Trade have received an opinion from the Law Officers, but I am unable to accede to my hon. friend's request, as such opinions are treated as confidential.

London and North Western Railway's Re-housing Scheme at Regent's Park.

MR. GRAHAM (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that property has been purchased and plans prepared by the London and North Western Railway Company at Gloucester Gate, in the immediate neighbourhood of Regent's Park, for the rehousing of the working-class inhabitants to be displaced by the scheme for reconstructing and enlarging Euston Railway Station, according to the Act of 1900, Section 50; and whether, having regard to the fact that these sites are one mile and a quarter distant from Euston Station, and to the residential character of this neighbourhood, to the objection expressed to the plan by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, and to the fact that sites near the Hampstead Road and quite close to Euston Station have already been acquired by the London and North Western Railway Company, which would be most suitable for the purpose, he will take steps so that the company may carry out their original intention of building the working-class houses in the latter position.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The London and North Western Railway Company have made application to the Local Government Board for their approval of a scheme for providing housing accommodation for 840 persons of the working classes near Gloucester Gate, Regent's Park. The Board have not received any objections to the scheme, but an inquiry with regard to it will be held by one of their inspectors on the 30th instant, at the Town Hall, St. Pancras. The inspector will be prepared to receive at the inquiry any representation as to the suitability of the site or the advantages of any other site.

Unstemmed Tobacco.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the quantity of pounds weight of unstemmed tobacco (whole leaf) cleared from bond from 1st January to 31st March in the current year; and the quantity of stems returned for drawback from 1st February to 30th April in the current year, and the basis of moisture upon which this quantity is calculated.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The quantity of unstemmed tobacco (whole leaf) cleared from bond for home consumption from 1st January to 31st March in the current year was 8,789,474 lbs. The quantity of stems (tobacco stalks) deposited for drawback from the 1st February to 30th April in the current year was 445,404 lbs. This quantity consisted of a very large number of deposits at varying degrees of moisture. It would not at present be possible to state the quantity of stems at the standard moisture of 14 per cent. which it represents.

Crossgar (County Down) Water Supply and Sewage System.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the insanitary condition of Crossgar, county Down, owing to bad water supply and want of a sewage system; and whether he will have a Local Government inspector sent to report on the state of the town.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Representations as to the defective sewerage and unsatisfactory water supply of Crossgar have been made to the Local Government Board. The matter has been brought to the notice of the district council, who, the Board understand, are carrying out works to improve the sewerage and provide a water supply.

Sherlock Estate, County Cork.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether definite steps have been taken concerning the sale of the Sherlock Estate, Ballyrobin, Cloyne, county Cork, at present in the Land Judge's Court, and how the case now stands.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am informed that the abstract of the owner's title has been lodged in Court, but the rulings on it have not yet been issued.

Pension of James M'Keogh, late Shoemaker at Dundrum Lunatic Asylum.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the value of allowances for pension purposes to assistants in the Dundrum Lunatic Asylum is £40; if he can state why James M'Keogh, late shoemaker at the asylum, received pension calculated only at the rate of £25 per annum for allowances; and on what grounds are the inspectors justified in withholding this allowance from an attendant of ten and a-half years service.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This Question is based on a misapprehension. No pension was awarded in the case.

Grazing Rights on Glennamaddon Mountain.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a notice issued by Mr. R. V. Stoney, of Rosturk Castle, county Mayo, warning tenants, residing on land which he sold to the Congested Districts Board, against grazing cattle or sheep on Glennamaddon Mountain, north of the Lockspit, or east of Murrivagh Mearing; and whether, seeing that this mountain forms part of the estate sold by Mr. Stoney to the Congested Districts Board, he will take steps to secure that those tenants shall not be prevented from grazing on it as they have been accustomed to do.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This mountain, which consists of 1,965 acres of rough grazing land, is part of the property which was purchased by the Congested Districts Board, but when Mr. Stoney offered to sell to the Board 196 acres of arable land, of which 174 is untenanted, they accepted his condition that they should resell to him, for the price which they had given to him, the mountain land referred to. The price of the arable land so purchased is £3,975, and the price of that resold to Mr. Stoney is only £600. This mountain land did not form part of the tenants' holdings, nor had they any rights of grazing over it.

King-Harman Estate.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the five cases of grass farms on the King-Harman Estate, in which the Estates Commissioners have agreed to consider favourably to purchase the tenants' interests through the vendor, he can state the amount proposed to be paid for the landlord's interest in each case, and the number of years purchase of the rent the amount represents; also the amount proposed to be paid for the tenant's interest in each case, and the number of years purchase of the rent the amount represents; have any of those tenants refused to sign their purchase agreements on the ground of excessive price; whether the Treasury have sanctioned or are prepared to sanction the arrangement for advancing money to the vendor in this case, or in the case of other properties, for purchasing the dual interest of landlord and tenant in grass farms for the purpose of division amongst the smaller occupiers; and, if so, if he can state the names of the cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) In the cases referred to in which the Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of grass farms hitherto occupied by tenants, they propose to purchase the lands as untenanted, and do not therefore put a separate valuation on the interests of the landlord and the tenants respectively. The dealings with the tenants are carried on by the proposed vendor, and not by the Commissioners. The Commissioners propose to give for the lands, as untenanted, such prices as they consider the lands can be resold for, having due regard to the security. They have no information that these tenants have refused to sign agreements for purchase. There is no proposal that money shall be advanced to the landlord to enable him to purchase the tenants' interests.

Irish Agricultural Department's Horse-Breeding Schemes.

MR. P. A. MCHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in the horse-breeding schemes of the Irish Agricultural

Department hackney and Welsh stallions are still used; and, if so, how many are there and where are they located; and whether the employment of hackney stallions in the congested districts has been attended with such results as to justify their further use in these or other districts of the country.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Hackney and Welsh stallions are not used in connection with the Department's general horse-breeding scheme. Of the stallions transferred from the Congested Districts Board in 1904, several are still in use, viz., three of the hackney breed in Donegal, three in Mayo, and one in Leitrim; while of the Welsh stallions, one is located in Mayo, and four in Galway. Opinions differ widely as to the suitability of the hackney breed for congested districts, but, while the Department do not encourage this breed, they have not seen their way to deprive farmers in congested districts of all the sires located there by the Congested Districts Board.

Payment of Army Officers through Banking Agents.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that the entire sum assigned in the grant for the pay of officers in the Army is paid over at monthly or other intervals to a private banking firm, constituted Army agents for this purpose, who disburse the pay to the individual officers, that the sum is paid to the agents out of the Treasury *en bloc* at some interval before it becomes payable to the individual officers, with the result of giving the agents the use and control of this public money during these periods, he will say under what authority this system originated and is maintained; whether any similar or analogous system obtains in other Departments of the public service; whether it has been brought to the attention of the War Office that the effect of constituting private bankers paymasters of the Army officers is to give one firm a practical monopoly of the banking business of officers in the Army; and will he explain why the practice of the India Office and Admiralty is not followed, whereby an officer can draw his pay personally or by power of attorney from a Government Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The agents are only paid the money as it becomes due to the officers. The practice has been in force for very many years. It is maintained by the authority of the Secretary of State, with the sanction of the Treasury. The War Office is not aware of the practice of other Departments in the matter. There are three firms involved, not one. The practice has been maintained in the interests of the officers concerned. From July 1st any Army officer will be able to draw his pay either locally or through the agents as he prefers. Regimental officers can do so at present.

Militia and Volunteer Submarine Miners.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to his recent statement that all Militia and Volunteer submarine mining divisions in the United Kingdom were to be dispensed with, he is aware that recruiting for the same is still being carried on; and whether capitation grants are to be paid for the men so enrolled.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Recruiting is still being carried on in certain cases, since there are duties in connection with our ports which can still be performed by these units. Capitation grants will be paid, when earned, according to the conditions which may be fulfilled.

Quartering of Troops at Duncannon.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has received a memorial from the people of Duncannon and the surrounding district, asking for a return of the military to Duncannon station; and whether, in view of the barrack accommodation and rifle range at Duncannon, he will accede to the wishes of the memorialists.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The hon. Member was informed last November that the memorial mentioned had been received and that the views of the memorialists as to the quartering of troops at Duncannon would receive full consideration in connection with any scheme involving the redistribution of the troops in Ireland. I have nothing further to add to this information.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Mobilisation Arrangements.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can inform the House the proportion of field artillery and cavalry held to be necessary for the effective mobilisation of every division of infantry 12,000 strong; and if such proportion is available for the sixteen divisions of Volunteer infantry provided for service in emergency; and, if not, how many field batteries and squadrons of horse would be available if the Regular Army was absent from Great Britain.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): Two brigades of field artillery and one squadron of cavalry form the proportion of field artillery and cavalry laid down for each division of Regular troops for service abroad. Should the Regular divisions be absent abroad, brigades of field artillery would be available for such Volunteer divisions as are proposed for home defence, and in the event of all the Regular cavalry being sent abroad, the Imperial Yeomanry would take their place.

Plague Mortality in India.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state the number of deaths from plague in India from January 1st, 1905, to the week ending April 1st last; whether he will give the latest information in his possession as to the mortality from plague during the month of April; and whether he will arrange for the publication of the weekly tabular returns of plague in the English newspapers.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): From January 1st to the week ending April 1st inclusive the number of plague deaths was 471,744. In April for the four weeks ending April 29th the mortality was 215,961. Under arrangements lately made the plague mortality in each calendar month will be reported to me by telegram, and I propose to communicate it regularly to the Press for the present. The weekly statements are not in a form suitable for the requirements of the Press, and they are three weeks old when received.

Treaty with the Afghan Ameer.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India when he will lay upon the Table a translation of the Agreement recently concluded with the Ameer of Afghanistan, together with other Papers relating to the Mission to Cabul.

MR. BRODRICK: The Papers will be laid on the Table to-day and will be distributed without unnecessary delay.

Beer Manufacture—Analysis of Ingredients.

DR. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the results of the analysis made by the officials of the Inland Revenue during the past two years ending April 30th, 1905, of all the ingredients used in the manufacture of beer, including regenerators and yeast foods, and whether the Inland Revenue officers have full knowledge of all the substances used by brewers in the manufacture of beer; and will he state what penalties, if any, there are against the brewer for not making a full return of all the materials he uses.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): During the two years ended April 30th, 1905, the following samples of materials used in brewing have been examined at the Government Laboratory:—1,893 samples of malt, rice, and maize, in various forms, sugar, glucose, invert sugar, syrups, etc.; 238 samples of yeast foods, heading powders, and liquids, antacids, antiseptics, hop substitutes, etc. The object of the analysis of these samples was either the determination of the brewing value for revenue purposes, or to test their purity, particularly as regards freedom from arsenic. The results of the analysis may be summarised as follows:—In 1,972 cases no objection was raised to the articles of which samples were examined. In seventy-nine cases the articles submitted were not objected to, but the applicants were informed that the non-interference of the Board would not protect the user from any action which might be taken under the Foods and Drugs Act. In the remaining eighty cases objection was raised to the use of the articles submitted on some one of the following grounds—(1) that the samples examined showed the presence of arsenic beyond the limit recommended by the Royal Commission on Arsenical Poisoning; (2) the presence of copper; (3) the presence of Quillaia bark or extract; or (4) that they were alcoholic flavouring essences. Inland Revenue officers have full knowledge of the substances used by brewers for sale in the manufacture of beer. The penalty incurred by a brewer for not entering a full account in his brewing book of the materials used in brewing is £100.

National Debt.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can now give an estimate of the amount by which the National Debt will be increased in the current financial year by the liabilities classified as "other capital liabilities" in the Annual Returns relating to the National Debt.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In the Budget Statement it was provisionally estimated that the issues required on Capital Account in 1905-6 would be about £9,000,000. Towards this sum we had in hand, as the result of surplus borrowings in 1904–5, £844,000. So the gross increase of liability would be £8,156,000. But there is provided in the Votes for 1905-6 in reduction of existing liabilities £1,685,000. So the net increase of liabilities on this head would be £6,471,000. Against this increase must be set the reduction in the National Debt under other heads, namely—

By terminable annuities included in the Fixed Debt-Charge - - - -	5,340,000
From minor sources - -	300,000
And the repayment of Exchequer Bonds as explained in my Budget Statement - - -	4,000,000
Total reduction -	£9,640,000

Thus the net diminution in the aggregate liabilities may be estimated at rather more than £3,000,000.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: There must be some increase in capital expenditure?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, roughly £6,500,000.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): Is it not the case that the Sinking Fund provides for a reduction of £10,000,000 yearly, whereas the actual reduction will be only £3,000,000?

Mr AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I really do not understand the object of that Question. As I have said, the net reduction will be a little over £3,000,000.

Mr. McCRAE: But does not the Sinking Fund provide for a reduction of £10,000,000 annually?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Notice had better be given of any further Question.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): We understand that the net result this year will be a reduction of the National Debt by £3,000,000?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Rather more than £3,000,000.

Admiralty Expenditure at Whale Island.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer on what conditions, and by virtue of what authority, the sanction of the Treasury was given to the expenditure by the Admiralty, in the financial year ending 31st March, 1905, of a sum of £4,000 on buildings at Whale Island, not authorised by the Navy Estimates of that year.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Board of Admiralty represented to the Treasury, in January last, the urgency in the public interest of providing accommodation at Whale Island for the instruction of naval lieutenants by the coming autumn, and the Treasury gave its assent accordingly. No excess on Navy Vote 10 for 1904–5 was entailed by the expenditure of £4,000 shown at page 135 of the current Navy Estimates, and consequently the authority of the Treasury was that governing the transfer of moneys between sub-head and sub-head of the same Vote. As the hon. Member is aware, the Estimate of Navy Vote 10 for the current year, which includes this service, has been passed in Committee of Supply.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: What authority had the Treasury for allowing the Admiralty to spend money for a service not provided for in last year's Estimates? Do the Treasury assume the right to authorise any Department to apply public money for public services not sanctioned by the House?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Treasury has power, as the hon. Gentleman must know, to convey money voted under one sub-head for the Navy to another sub-head of the same Vote. That is the authority which we used.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: What I am asking is what authority the Treasury has when the House has not sanctioned expenditure on a particular service to allow the Admiralty to spend money on it. Taking money from one sub-head and applying it to another is a totally different thing.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Treasury did it under the authority I have stated by transferring from one sub-head to another. In this particular case there was no money provision under the sub-head to which the transfer was made. The hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware from his experience as a Civil Lord of the Admiralty that the Treasury does take the responsibility of sanctioning expenditure in anticipation of Parliamentary approval.

Monastic and Conventual Institutions and Succession Duty.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the property held by monastic and conventual institutions is made liable to succession duty; and, if so, what amount has been so paid for the past financial year.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is impossible to give a full Answer to my hon. friend in reply to a Question. Much depends upon the particular circumstances of each case. But a full statement of the law and practice will be found in the Report of the Select Committee on Conventual and Monastic Institutions of 1871 which was presided over by Mr. Villiers. No claims to exemption were received last year on the ground that property in respect of which duty was claimed was held on trust for monastic institutions, and such claims would not be admissible if received; but it is impossible to distinguish the duty, if any, paid on such property within the last twelve months from the duty received from other sources.

Dog Duties—Compounding Fines.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to a case in Islington in which the Inland Revenue authorities seek to impose a fine of 2s. 6d. on an individual against whom it was alleged he had not taken out his dog licence sufficiently early; under what statute are the collectors authorised to levy such fines, and into what fund are they paid; and whether, in view of the fact that such proceedings are liable to abuse, he can see his way to put a stop to them.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The case is one of a kind very common under the practice of the Board, whereby, in virtue of the powers conferred by Section 35 (1) of the Inland Revenue Regulation Act, 1890, offenders in the matter of dog licences are offered the opportunity of paying a small fine as an alternative to appearing before the police magistrate. It is always open to an offender to elect this latter alternative, but, out of many thousands annually, the cases in which such election is made are relatively few. It may be inferred from this that the option of paying a fine is regarded as a privilege rather than as a hardship. The fines are paid into the Local Taxation Account. In the particular case to which the hon. Member has drawn my attention, the licence was not taken out until March 9th, after the detection had been made. If, in such circumstances, the offence were wholly condoned, I am afraid that very few licences would be taken until the authorities had detected the default.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): Does the regulation apply to the Inland Revenue in Ireland?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Dog licences in Ireland are on altogether a different footing.

MR. LOUGH: What is the total amount realised by these fines? Is the amount of each fine fixed by a particular officer? Does the right hon. Gentleman not think that the practice is open to abuse?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot tell the amount without notice. The amount is fixed in each case by the Inland Revenue Department. The person from whom a fine is claimed has the alternative of a prosecution if he thinks that it is fixed arbitrarily and too high and he can go before the magistrates. But the fine obviously is a lesser penalty than the law imposes.

Magistrates as Motorists.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that at a special sitting of the county magistrates, at Andover, to hear the first batch of thirty summonses against motorists for driving to the common danger around Andover during the Easter Holidays, Captain John Robert Stanford, of White Hatch and West Tilbury, a magistrate for Wilts and Dorset, pleaded guilty to driving a car at the rate of over thirty-seven miles an hour, and was fined £10 and costs; and, if so, whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been directed to the case with reference to the removal of this gentleman from the commission of the peace for two counties.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have had no other intimation of this matter than that contained in the Question. I have mentioned the matter to the Lord Chancellor, who informs me that the circumstances of the case are not yet sufficiently before him to enable him to form any opinion.

Parliamentary Agents—Messrs. Bircham & Co.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state if other borough council clerks, for whom Messrs. Bircham and Company act as Parliamentary agents, receive, as in the Holborn case, 33⅓ per cent. of the profit charges; and, if so, whether such payments are known to the public bodies concerned.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am not in possession of the information for which the hon. Member asks.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will take care that no circular is sent to the various local bodies asking them to give preference to this firm of Parliamentary agents because they are in the service of the Government?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR'S reply was inaudible.

Poor Law School Children.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of children at present maintained in the district and separate Poor Law schools of the Metropolis and of the provinces respectively.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: On the 1st January last, the latest date for which information is at present available, there were 7,805 pauper children chargeable to Poor Law unions in London, and 4,329 children chargeable to Poor Law unions in the rest of England and Wales, who were maintained in district and separate schools.

Pathological Parcels by Post.

Dr. HUTCHINSON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he could see his way to rescind the regulation as to the compulsory registration of pathological material sent by post, and allow in its place some distinctive mark upon the envelope.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): In view of the risk attending the transmission of pathological material by post it is important that special precautions should be taken. The regulation which requires that such material shall be registered is, in my opinion, a necessary one, and I regret that I cannot see my way to modify it.

Dr. HUTCHINSON: Arising out of the Question I should like to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that something like half a million of these specimens were sent through the post during last year, and the law was not carried out, while no injury was caused to anybody. Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in consequence of post offices closing at 8 o'clock on Saturday nights and not opening till 8 o'clock on Monday mornings, a great deal of inconvenience and even danger is caused, and will he therefore reconsider the question.

Lord STANLEY: No, Sir. I think special precautions should be taken in the interests of the staff, and I am not prepared to modify the present arrangements.

Ex-Soldiers and Sailors in the Postal Service.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the meeting at the Royal United Service Institution on May 16th, whereat complaint was made of the little employment offered by Government Departments to ex-soldiers and sailors of good character; and if he can state generally how many former soldiers and sailors are now in the employ of the General Post Office, to how many permanent employment was given between April 1st, 1904, and March 31st, 1905, and to how many temporary employment was given.

Lord STANLEY: My attention has been called to the meeting at the Royal United Service Institution and to the complaint to which the hon. Member refers, and I have to say that there is clearly some misapprehension. In connection with the Return for which the hon. Member is asking full particulars will be obtained, but I may say at once that during the last financial year about 1,000 ex-soldiers and sailors received Post Office appointments in the United Kingdom under Civil Service Certificates, in addition to a considerable number who were employed in various unestablished capacities.

Sea Encroachment on the East Coast.

Lieut.-Colonel TUFNELL (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will grant an inquiry regarding the damage which is being caused to the eastern counties through the encroachment of the sea on the coast.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): I regret that I am not able to add anything to the reply given by the Prime Minister to the hon. Member for the Lowestoft Division of Suffolk on March 30th† last.

Customs Watchers' Grievances.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state what, if any, concessions he is prepared to make in answer to the petition of the Customs watchers.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): This matter is still under my consideration, but I hope to be able to make a statement thereon, if not before Whitsuntide, soon after.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 1735.

MR. CAUSTON: I shall repeat the Question this day week, with special reference to the appeal of the upper section with regard to pensions.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I will do the best I can to get the information asked for.

Solar Eclipse Expedition.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government are intending to take any steps to secure for the public benefit a record of any scientific observations of the forthcoming total solar eclipse on the August 30th next.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Yes, Sir. An expedition is being sent out at Government expense to make observations.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON: Where is it going?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I believe to Morocco.

Communication between Parliament Buildings and Westminster Hospital.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether, in view of the fact that on the physical disablement of any Member of Parliament there is at present no means of summoning immediate professional aid other than the services of any hon. Member connected with the medical profession who may happen to be on the premises, he can make a statement as to erecting a telephone to Westminster Hospital, and as to the intention of the Treasury to make an adequate money grant to the hospital to secure prompt medical assistance in the House when needed,

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I am able to inform the hon. Member that telephonic communication with the Westminster Hospital was arranged on Friday last. The Post Office will make the connection early this week. The last part of the Question is one for my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury.

British School at Shaw, Lancashire.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that the British elementary school at Shaw, in Lancashire, has (as was stated by the managers in their application for a final order, dated November 7th, 1903) been heretofore carried on as a non-sectarian school, the religious instruction in which has been undenominational, and not superintended by any clergyman; and that the vicar and other present managers of the school have recently publicly announced that the Catechism and Collects of the Church of England will be henceforth taught in the school; and whether, having regard to the character the school has hitherto borne, and to the fact that it is the only undenominational school out of the six schools in the district, the Board of Education propose to take any such action as is open to them to prevent the religious instruction given in the school from being denominational.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The Shaw British School has been a voluntary school in private ownership, and has, it is believed, been recently acquired by purchase from its previous owners. The character of the religious instruction given in a voluntary school is under the control of the managers, and no new order for foundation managers is applied for in this case. I understand that it is contended that the transfer of a voluntary school under these conditions constitutes the provision of a new school within the meaning of Sections 8 and 9 of the Education Act, 1902, and I am proposing to receive a deputation on the subject.

Sneem Steamboat Service.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in consequence of the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company's steamer from Sneem, the winkle industry, which during the previous season resulted in the earning of over £300 by families in the district, has been completely destroyed; and whether, in view of the effect of the agreement made between the Congested Districts Board and the railway company, the clause by which the Board has bound itself not to grant a subsidy to any shipping company for the next five years will be cancelled.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The Board have no information that the fact is as stated in the first inquiry. I have already given the reasons why the agreement between the Board and the railway company cannot be withdrawn. The object of this agreement was to obtain favourable railway rates upon the withdrawal of the subsidised steamship service, and that object has been attained.

MR. BOLAND: Will the right hon. Gentleman direct an inquiry into the industries destroyed by the action of the Congested Districts Board?

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir. I cannot see that an inquiry is necessary. The Board have made the best arrangement they could.

MR. BOLAND: But the public opinion of the whole county condemns the arrangement.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): What object is gained, seeing you have destroyed an industry and done great injury to a whole district?

MR. WALTER LONG: We secured special arrangements with regard to railway rates.

Insurance of Kerry Fishing Boats.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state in how many individual cases the scheme issued some months ago by the Congested Districts Board for the insurance of fishing boats has been taken advantage of in the fishing districts of the county Kerry.

MR. WALTER LONG: In one case only, so far.

MR. BOLAND: Is it because the rate is too high?

MR. WALTER LONG: I believe it is because the arrangement has only been in force a short time. I do not think there is any allegation that the rates are too high.

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain why certain competent clerks in the veterinary branch of the Agricultural Department have been deprived of all hope of promotion, and, after more than ten years service, are limited to a practically stationary salary of £95 a year, whilst other persons of less experience and not superior in qualification have been brought in at much higher salaries to do the same class of work.

MR. WALTER LONG: The facts are precisely the reverse of what is stated in the Question. On the 11th instant † I informed the hon. Member that these clerks are on the scale of salary proper to the grade to which they belong, that is to say, a scale increasing by annual increments up to £150 a year.

MR. NANNETTI: In view of this public scandal will the right hon. Gentleman order an inquiry?

MR. WALTER LONG: I do not think there is any ground whatever for an inquiry.

Cost of Suppressing the Carrowkeel Meeting.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to state how many county and district inspectors were in charge of the constabulary sent to suppress a meeting at Carrowkeel, county Galway, on April 30th; their names and the districts to which they belong; and if he will state the total cost connected with the constabulary, directly or indirectly, connected with the Carrowkeel meeting.

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† See page 33.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Four; namely, County Inspector Lopdell, of Galway, W.R., and District Inspectors Glasgow of Clifden, Egan of Oughterard, and Spier of Spiddal. The total cost is about £100.

Proclamation of the Carrowkeel Meeting.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland who was the resident magistrate who issued the proclamation forbidding a political meeting at Carrowkeel, county Galway, on April 30th; upon what information he proceeded and the grounds upon which he took action; when was the proclamation issued; and if, before issue of the proclamation, the facts upon which the magistrate acted were submitted to the Government.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The proclamation was issued by Mr. Bell, resident magistrate, on April 29th. It was based on an information sworn by the district inspector of police, referring to the placards convening the meeting, which called on the people to assemble in their thousands and show by their presence that a certain farm must be divided among the people. The remainder of the information was to the purport and effect that the object and effect of the meeting, if held, would be intimidation, and that the meeting would cause a breach of the peace. The reply to the concluding inquiry is in the affirmative.

Alleged Police Violence at the Carrowkeel Proclaimed Meeting.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that violence was used upon Mr. Thomas Higgins, J.P., at the proclaimed meeting at Carrowkeel on April 30th last; that without provocation on his part he was seized by six constables and thrown over a stone wall; that at the same meeting Councillor Kennedy, of Dunmore, was seized by several constables and thrown to the ground; and that other acts of violence were perpetrated; and whether such conduct on the part of the constabulary has been sanctioned by the Government.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No violence—properly so-called—was used to either of the gentlemen named, but only sufficient force was exerted to prevent the proclaimed meeting from being held. The hon. Member himself and Mr. Higgins, followed by a crowd of 200 persons, including Mr. Kennedy, were stopped by the police when nearing Carrowkeel. The county inspector informed them that no meeting would be allowed. Mr. Higgins attempted to force his way through the police, and, on being prevented, jumped over a low wall into a field and commenced to address the people. He refused to desist, and was then pushed on by a constable, whereupon he jumped back into the road, and the crowd returned by the way they had come. Mr. Higgins was not thrown over a wall, nor was Mr. Kennedy thrown to the ground. The action of the police on the occasion received the approval of the Government.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House what the Irish Government's definition of violence, "properly so-called," is? And will he say whether anything short of breaking a man's skull is considered violence?

Mr. WALTER LONG: The meaning of that sentence is that the police had orders to prevent the meeting from being held, and I am informed that they used no violence in carrying out their orders. But they compelled those who tried to hold the meeting to desist.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Did the right hon. Gentleman take any steps to get independent testimony as to the action of the police; or is the report on which he has based his approval of the action of the police the report of the police themselves?

Mr. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; the only information I have is that given to me by the police who were responsible. I have read other accounts, and I have no reason to believe that the police departed from their strict duty in the matter, or gave an inaccurate account of what occurred.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: They did throw this man violently over the fence.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Could not the right hon. Gentleman have consulted the hon. Member for Galway in this House? Does he not think it worth while, before taking the word of the police, to consult a Member of this House who is on an equal footing with himself in this House?

MR. WALTER LONG: That is a most astonishing Question. The hon. Member for Galway is the complainant in the matter. [NATIONALIST cries of "And the police are the defendants."] All I can do is to give to the House the information I have received. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the information I have given.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is it proposed to suppress the expression of public opinion in Ireland?

MR. WALTER LONG: Judging by recent events, I should say certainly not.

South of Ireland Fisheries.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the herring fishing season does not open in the majority of English and Manx fishing grounds before the months of June or July, and in view of the fact that large quantities of immature mackerel are captured by herring boats off the south coast of Ireland in the months of April and May, to the injury of the mackerel fishing and curing industry, and that the evidence given before the public inquiry in 1892 proved that large quantities of small and unsaleable haak are also captured by herring nets in these months, the Fisheries Branch of the Department of Agriculture will take steps to hold an inquiry into the complaints made by the fishermen of the south and south-west coast of Ireland regarding the injury caused to the mackerel and haak fishing industries by the practice of herring fishing at an early season of the year.

MR. WALTER LONG: As I have already informed the hon. Member, this matter formed the subject of an exhaustive inquiry in 1892, since when the situation has not, so far as the Department are aware, been changed in any way. It is therefore considered that no good purpose would be served by holding a further inquiry.

MR. FLYNN: In view of the fact that the inquiry was held thirteen years ago, when the vast majority of fishing boats did not engage in this work—except a small number of Scottish boats—will not the right hon. Gentleman, bearing in mind the responsibility of the Irish Board, hold another inquiry now?

MR. WALTER LONG: The Irish Board fully appreciate their responsibility, and see no change in the situation such as would make an inquiry desirable. But if the hon. Gentleman is in possession of any facts which he thinks alter the position, I shall be very glad to consider them.

MR. FLYNN: I will raise the question on the Vote for the Congested Districts Board.

Allotments for Irish Herds.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners, when purchasing grass farms, always consider the case of the herds on the farms; and if he could state, even roughly, how many herds have been made proprietors, and how much land, on an average, such herd has obtained.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners endeavour to provide for herds when allotting parcels of the untenanted lands upon which they have been employed, provided they come within the classes of persons entitled to advances. It is estimated roughly that about thirty-seven herds have been so provided for. The area allotted to each varies in accordance with the quality of the land and the size of the farm upon which the herd has been employed. Approximately the acreage varies from sixteen to twenty acres, and the average purchase money would be about £500.

Irish Agrarian Returns.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what is the intention of, and what object is served by, issuing periodical Parliamentary Returns of Agrarian Offences in Ireland; and whether, in view of the fact that no such Return is issued for England, Scotland, for Wales, he will take steps to discontinue it.

Mr. WALTER LONG: These Annual Returns are furnished for the information of Parliament. They have been so furnished for a great many years, and it is not intended to discontinue them.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Why are these Returns made for Ireland and not for England, Scotland, and Wales? What is the object?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I do not know. I will inquire.

Terms of Irish Land Purchase.

Mr. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of years purchase paid by a tenant under the Purchase Act of 1896 who bought his holding at a reduction of 20 per cent. on the rental; and whether he can state the number of years purchase paid by a tenant under the Act of 1903 who bought his holding at 20 per cent. reduc ion on rental.

Mr. WALTER LONG: In the case of a purchase under the Land Purchase Acts, 1891 to 1896, when the annuity amounted to 20 per cent. less than the rent, the purchase money represented twenty years purchase of the rent. In the case of a purchase under the Act of 1903, the purchase money, under the same conditions, represents a little over twenty-four and a-half years purchase of the rent.

Mr. FLAVIN said the hard fact remained that the average price of land had been raised from seventeen years to twenty-four years purchase.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): Does the twenty-four years include the bonus?

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): No, the bonus is added.

Rural District Councillors as Teachers.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.); I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether any disqualification attaches to rural district councillors, otherwise qualified, from acting as teachers in evening national schools.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member's similar Question of the 3rd instant.†

Sunday Football in Ireland.

Mr. SLOAN, (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, for a considerable time past and especially on the 14th instant, the Gaelic footballers of Coalisland and Cookstown have paraded on Sundays through Tullyhogue, Grange, and Stewartstown, and fired revolvers to the annoyance of the inhabitants attending Divine service; and what action, if any, does he propose to take in order to avoid similar occurrences in future.

Mr. WALTER LONG: On two Sundays within the past three months a football team from Cookstown has proceeded to Coalisland, and two return visits, also on Sundays, have been paid by the Coalisland team. On one of these occasions the latter team sang a Party song when passing Stewartstown Protestant Church. On another occasion the Cookstown team sang Party songs, and it is alleged that a shot was fired by a member of the team near Tullyhogue, but of the latter occurrence the police have no evidence. I understand that on the one side games on Sundays are objected to, while on the other the situation is aggravated by Party displays in hostile localities. The police will take all necessary measures for preserving the peace, and for preventing any interference with Divine service.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 816.

Gaelic Footballers Sunday Visit to Clonoe.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what were the number of extra police or those doing extra duty and the cost, in consequence of the Gaelic footballers visit to Clonoe, on Sunday the 14th instant; and will the charge be levied on the district.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The police employed on this occasion belonged to the district, and no extra cost was involved.

Balbriggan Harbour.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received from the Dublin Port and Docks Board any statement regarding the necessity of immediately dredging Balbriggan Harbour; and, if so, whether he has arrived at any conclusion on the subject.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Port and Docks Board applied to me for a grant to maintain, improve, and enlarge the accommodation of this harbour, and I was obliged to express my regret that there were no funds at the disposal of the Government out of which such a grant could be made.

Mr. CLANCY: Will not the right hon. Gentleman provide funds?

Mr. WALTER LONG: It is not in my power.

Rossmacowen Eviction.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has any official information as to the conduct of the police at an eviction at Rossmacowen, on the Clinton Estate, county Cork, some twelve months ago.

Mr. WALTER LONG: My right hon. friend the Member for Dover replied to a Question put to him on June 14th,† 1904, by the hon. Member for West Cork, relative to the action of the police at this eviction. I presume my hon. friend's Question has reference to a statement which was recently published in the Press to the effect that on the same occasion "men's heads were split with batons, women were violently assaulted, and a man was stabbed." I am informed that considerable opposition and resistance were offered to the sheriff and his assistants, all of whom were struck several times by missiles, and that an inmate of one of the houses used a pitchfork, which was wrenched from him by a sergeant of police. In the scuffle the man received a scratch on the cheek from one of the prongs of the fork; the injury was trifling. This is the only foundation for the statement to which I have referred, and which in other respects is absolutely and entirely untrue.

Mr. FLAVIN: How is it it has taken twelve months to get this remarkable information?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have said my right hon. friend the Member for Dover dealt with it in 1904.

Mr. MACVEAGH: How was the right hon Gentleman able to read the thoughts of the hon. Member for South Antrim.?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I did not. I read what I gathered in the Press.

Dursey Island Eviction.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, at the recent eviction on Dursey Island, James Leary was stabbed by a policeman with a bayonet; and whether he has yet received a report on the conduct of the police on that occasion.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have received a full report of the proceedings on the occasion mentioned. Leary endeavoured to wrest a rifle from a head constable, and in so doing his hand was cut by the backsight or foresight of the rifle; but there is no truth whatever in the statement that Leary was stabbed with a bayonet. Bayonets were not fixed.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxvi., 26.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that on this occasion one of the islanders jumped into the sea and swam ashore to the mainland in order to escape the violence of the police?

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN asked whether the great Naval Powers of the world were informed by the Admiralty of the great victory of the British Fleet in evicting old Healy on Dursey Island without loss of life, or injury to the "Storm Cock."

[No Answer was returned.]

Morley Estate, County Cavan—Turbary Rights.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the Morley Estate, county Cavan, were to be supplied with turbary, and that the holdings were to be inspected according to the terms of sale; and will he say if there has been any alteration in these arrangements.

MR. WALTER LONG: Neither the originating application nor the agreements for purchase make any reference to a supply of turbary. The Commissioners are aware that there is turbary on the estate, and the question of a supply for the tenants will be considered by them. All cases which do not come within the provisions of Section 1 (*a*) and (*b*) will be duly inspected and reported on.

Morley Estate Purchase Agreements.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of purchase agreements which have been lodged in the Morley Estate, county Cavan; if advances have been sanctioned in any cases; and, if so, how many, with the date of the sanctioning of such advance.

MR. WALTER LONG: 389 agreements for purchase have been lodged, but an advance has not yet been sanctioned in any case.

Poundage Rates on Irish Land Payments.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in country districts where there is no bank tenants who have purchased their holdings are compelled to pay poundage rates on the postal orders by which payment of their purchase instalments are made; and whether he will take steps to relieve them of this impost.

MR. WALTER LONG: When a tenant purchaser remits the instalment of his purchase money by means of a money order, of course he pays the usual Post Office charges, which range from 2d. for £1 up to 6d. for a £20 order. The latter Question is one for the postal authorities.

Moneymore Disturbances.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Captain Walsh, R.M., reported to the Inspector-General, or any of his superiors, the undertaking admitted by him in evidence, at Moneymore Petty Sessions, county Derry, to have been made with four local Orangemen, that certain contingents of Nationalists attending a Nationalist demonstration at Loop, county Derry, should not be allowed to pass through Moneymore; and, if so, whether such undertaking was sanctioned; whether in the four days between this compact and the demonstration, these contingents were informed of this decision; and, if so, by whom; and whether, seeing that some members of these contingents who had to pass through Moneymore to reach their homes received injuries from a baton charge, that Nationalist processions have repeatedly passed through Moneymore without disturbance, and that Captain Creaghe, R.M., in giving judgment, said that, until the interference of the police, the procession was orderly, he will say what action the Government proposes to take.

Mr. WALTER LONG: As a necessary precaution to preserve peace and order, it was decided, with the sanction of the Government, that no Nationalist procession should be allowed to pass through Moneymore on this occasion save those on whose direct route it lay to and from the meeting. Moneymore is mainly inhabited by persons of the opposite Party, and the passage of Nationalist processions through it has frequently been accompanied by the breaking of windows and other disturbances. Captain Welch did not report the undertaking referred to in the first part of the Question, because such an undertaking was not given; but he informed four representatives of the local Orange lodge of the decision which had been arrived at. The Nationalist contingents from Lissan and Moneymore passed through the village without hindrance on their way to the meeting. Later in the day the police learnt that a party from Loop were accompanying the Lissan and Moneymore party towards Moneymore, though it was three miles out of their direct road home, and warning was at once sent to them that the Loop party would not be allowed to pass through Moneymore. The warning was disregarded. The police blocked the way and repeated the warning, but they were rushed and attacked by the entire procession. A baton charge was ordered, but not until injuries had been inflicted on the district inspector and others of the police. Some of the Lissan party, who were the first to attack the police, were hurt. Mr. Creaghe, in giving judgment, said that the Lissan and Moneymore procession was orderly until joined by the Loop party, when the three parties seemed to have turned into a very riotous, improper assembly. The steps taken by the Government were absolutely necessary for the preservation of the public peace. The Government do not propose to take any further action.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Did not Mr. Walsh in his evidence state that he did give this undertaking?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am informed he did not.

Mr. MACVEAGH: He swore he did. Really the right hon. Gentleman should make sure of his facts before answering a Question.

Ballinlonghane, Galway, Fishery.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, from time immemorial, the people of Ballinlonghane, Galway, have earned their living by fishing close to the village; that recently bailiffs have forbidden them to cast their nets there any longer, claiming such right solely for the owner of the Galway fishery: and that the nets belonging to Michael Joyce, Martin Joyce, and Thomas Corcoran were seized: and whether he will stop these proceedings, and restore to the people the rights of fishing so long enjoyed.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am informed that these nets were seized by bailiffs of the Board of Conservators, not upon the ground that the rights of any private fishery were encroached on. but because the nets were unlicensed and set in an illegal manner. I understand that the Conservators are considering the question of a prosecution. The matter is not one for the Executive to deal with. If the rights of the fishermen have been invaded, they have their remedy at law.

Galway Harbour Loan.

Colonel NOLAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Board of Works is specially in charge of Galway Harbour owing to a still undischarged loan; and, in view of the fact that the entrance to the harbour is now somewhat impaired, he will say if the Board of Works or the harbour master have received any communication showing that the harbour is becoming difficult of access for vessels of 3,000 tons, even when these have been lightened in the roadstead; and whether the Board of Works will soon take steps to improve the Galway entrance, either by procuring the dredger connected with the Agricultural Department or by other means.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The Board of Works have appointed a Receiver to collect the revenues of Galway Harbour, and all financial arrangements are subject to their approval as mortgagees. The upkeep of the harbour is in the hands of its Commissioners. It is known that the entrance of the harbour needs dredging, but the Board of Works have not received a communication stating that access was difficult for vessels of 3,000 tons. As regards the last portion of the hon. and gallant Member's Question, I would refer him to my reply to the hon. Member for Galway City.

Limerick Post Office—Wage Scale.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why the maximum salary at the Limerick Post Office was reduced from 50s. per week to 48s., seeing that the Bradford Report recommends that the salary at this office be increased; and will he say if he has received a petition from the local staff.

LORD STANLEY: The scale rising to 50s. a week is now obsolete, but officers at Limerick appointed before April 1st will retain that maximum. I have received a memorial from the staff, and I am having inquiry made as to whether the next higher scale rising to 52s. a week is warranted.

Male Learners in the Limerick Post Office.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there are seven male learners in the Limerick Post Office with services ranging from two years eight months to one year ten months; can he say when those who entered in August, 1902, and who are acting as temporary force pending revision will be appointed; whether he intends to compensate these learners for the time they are waiting appointment, or will their appointment date from the time it was necessary to create the temporary force; and whether, as regards the learners with twenty-two months service, he can hold out any prospect of appointment for them, other than the vacancies that may arise from superannuation, dismissal, or death.

LORD STANLEY: I am aware of the facts, which are substantially as stated by the hon. Member. As the revision depends on the occupation of a new office and other contingencies, I regret that I am unable at present to state when the learners acting as sorting clerks and telegraphists will be appointed. In the meantime, however, they receive an acting allowance which is in excess of their pay as learners, and I do not propose to give them further compensation or to date their appointments from the beginning of their temporary employment. The senior Limerick learner is at present No. 9 on the district list for employment at other offices. When the Limerick learners reach the top of the list there may be opportunities of offering them appointments at other towns.

Galway Harbour Loans.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the amount advanced, by way of loan, by the Board of Works to the Galway Harbour Commission; the year in which such loan was made; the amount of interest to date collected on such loan; the rate of interest charged; the amount of loan still due.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: (1) Loan of £24,000, sanctioned June 1st, 1832, interest 4 per cent. This loan was commuted under 30 and 31 Vic., cap. 56, the sum of £9,322 14s. 10d. principal, and £1,949 13s. 7d. interest being remitted, making a total remission of £11,272 8s. 5d. The commuted debt £10,000 was made repayable in fifty years at 3¼ per cent. The interest paid on the commuted loan to March 31st, 1905, amounts to £9,461 8s. 7d., and the principal now outstanding is £4,291 8s. 7d. (2) Loan of £28,100 sanctioned August 20th, 1880, rate of interest 4 per cent., period twenty-five years. Interest paid to March 31st, 1905, £14,537 12s. 4d., principal outstanding £12,173 19s. 9d. (3) Loan of £8,200 sanctioned March 13th, 1883, rate of interest 4 per cent., period twenty-five years. Interest paid £4,261 18s. 3d., principal outstanding £4,114 4s. 2d.

Galway Harbour—The Government Dredger.

MR. CHARLES DELVIN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the announcement that the Tralee Harbour Board expect to be through with the dredger by the 1st of August, and the fact that the need for dredging at the entrance to the new dock of Galway is pressing, and that the Galway Harbour Commissioners have been making representations on the subject to the Board of Works for years, he will place the dredger at the disposal of the Galway Harbour Commission early in August.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The dredger is engaged during the whole of the present year, but the Board of Works are endeavouring to make arrangements to render it available for use at Galway as soon as possible next year, and they are in correspondence with the Harbour Commissioners on the subject.

Next of Kin of Late Helen Blake.

Mr. O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if any sum of money was allowed from any source for the prosecution of inquiries as to the next of kin of the late Helen Blake; if so, by whom these inquiries were conducted, where they were held, and when; and what was the total sum expended, if any.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: No sum of money has been allowed from any source for the prosecution of inquiries as to the next of kin of the late Helen Blake.

Volunteers and Imperial Defence.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Committee of Imperial Defence has had under consideration the continuance of the state of affairs declared to exist in 1900, that there was no effective organisation for the utilisation of the Volunteers, notwithstanding the recommendations to that end of the Duke of Norfolk's Commission in June last; and what steps it is proposed to take in the matter.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I think it would be desirable that any Question dealing with the organisation of the Volunteers or of any other military force should be addressed to the Secretary for War and not to the Chairman of the Committee of Defence, with whom the matter does not rest. Perhaps my hon. friend will put this Question down to the Secretary for War for another day.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I will raise the question on the Motion for the adjournment for the Whitsuntide holidays.

The Scottish Churches Dispute.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now inform the House on what day he proposes to introduce the Bill which has been promised for dealing with the difficulties that have arisen in Scotland in connection with the property of the Free Church and the United Free Church.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have previously said, I have every expectation of being able to introduce this Bill before Whitsuntide, but short of that general statement I do not think I can give any precise information on the subject of the Question.

Mr. BRYCE: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is aware that great impatience on this subject exists in Scotland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, yes; I am aware of that impatience, and I think the anxiety on the subject is well justified, but I doubt whether time would really be gained by modifying the general outline of policy.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): As the General Assemblies meet this week could the right hon. Gentleman not arrange to have this Bill introduced while they are still in session?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am aware that the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland meet this week, and that was one of the reasons why I thought it might not be desirable to introduce the Bill during their session.

Naval and Military Expenditure.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the character of his proposals for Imperial defence and the growing opinion in favour of large reductions in the national expenditure to enable the country to meet its liabilities, he can see his way to undertake that the Government shall reconsider the outlay proposed in the Estimates for the present year, and so initiate steps to relieve distress and abate the growing discontent.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Gentleman has put this Question under a misapprehension. In the opinion of the Government the Estimates of the year are not in any excess of the national requirements; and I am sorry to say that the general lines of defensive policy which I endeavoured to sketch last Thursday do not, to my mind, hold out any hope of a reduction of the important kind which appeared in our debate on naval expenditure.

MR. LOUGH: Might not expenditure on capital account be somewhat modified in view of the declarations made?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has not seen our proposals for capital expenditure as yet. The Bill has not been brought in.

The Colonial Conference.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, if the present Government is still in office at the time of the holding of the Colonial Conference in 1906, it is their intention to authorise the British representatives to discuss with the colonial representatives the question of mutual preferential trading between the mother country and the Colonies.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The subject has not yet been considered by His Majesty's Government, but as the hon. Gentleman asks me the Question, it seems to me impossible for any Government to endeavour to restrict the discussions of a Conference with the Colonies; and certainly, if it is difficult for any Government, it would be especially difficult for a Government which desires closer commercial union with those Colonies.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Is it definitely settled that there is to be a Colonial Conference next year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, there was a Resolution passed at the last meeting of the Colonial Conference that there should be a Conference not later then 1906.

MR. LOUGH: Is not the right hon. Gentleman bound by a general pledge to do nothing during the existence of the present Parliament to advance the subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I was talking of the Conference, not of this House.

MR. SOARES: Is not the right hon. Gentleman bound by the terms of his Edinburgh speech?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Apparently you are bound by nothing.

ADJOURNMENT.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the Prime Minister, with regard to an Answer which he gave two minutes ago to the hon. Member for Barnstaple—which Answer caused great surprise to a great many Members of the House—whether we are to understand that he meant to imply that he was under no obligation to inaction in the matter of colonial preference except in this House, and that out of this House the Government were free to take any step they chose so far as any undertaking or pledge on his part was concerned; and, secondly, whether we are to understand him to say that he is not bound by anything he said on this subject in his Edinburgh speech?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. The right hon. Gentleman asks me whether I am bound to inaction with regard to colonial preference outside this House. Why, of course I am not. When the right hon. Gentleman is discussing it every day from a public platform, I suppose I may be allowed to answer him?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is a difference between discussion and action.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the right hon. Gentleman means that we desire to use our majority in this House for dealing with the fiscal question in the course of the present Parliament, I must reply that we certainly do not mean to do so.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Is it limited to proceedings in this House? Are we to understand that?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I really do not quite know what the right hon. Gentleman means.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Are we to understand that while the right hon. Gentleman is restricted by what he has said from proceedings or discussions in this House he is free, the Government are free, to take any administrative steps they choose which will have the effect of committing the country to a certain elementary stage, at all events, of this policy?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the Government ought to commit the country on the subject of fiscal reform during the continuance of the present Parliament.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that the Government is now bound by the specific statement made by Lord Lansdowne that they would not submit the question of colonial preference to the Colonial Conference without first seeking a mandate from the country on the question of the reference to the Conference?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not remember that at all.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The statement was specifically made in the House of Lords.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it was not, as a matter of fact.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Then may I ask the right hon. Gentleman if that is not his view as to the attitude of the Government? Does that represent his view of the attitude of the Government, that the Government will not submit the question of colonial preference to the Conference without first of all seeking a mandate from the country on the question of the reference to the Conference? Does that represent the attitude of the Government at the present moment?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no question of a reference to the Conference. The Conference comes together through its own action in 1906. [An Hon. Member: Who calls it?] That Conference is, like all its predecessors, and, I hope, all its successors, free to discuss any question. It is not free to bind the Colonies. It is certainly not free to bind this country or His Majesty's Government. I do not see how it would be possible for us or for our successors to limit free discussion in this Conference.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the right hon. Gentleman would make the House understand the matter better if he would answer the second part of my previous Question, which he has not done hitherto. Does he depart from the pledge he gave in his Edinburgh speech?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I in no sense depart from the policy I announced in my Edinburgh speech. I frankly admit when I made that speech I had not in contemplation the fact that a Conference was to come together automatically next year, and I said nothing about it. What I did say was that, in my judgment, in the present condition of public opinion in this country, it would neither be possible nor right for the Government to adopt any system of fiscal reform unless the plan had first been submitted to the country. That was the policy of the Edinburgh speech, and anybody who has read it must know that that was the policy of it.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The pledge given in the Edinburgh speech was that the country would be consulted, first as to the submission of this matter to the Conference, and then again, if necessary, as to the question of approving or disapproving the results of the Conference. There were to be two consequential references to the country in the matter before anything was done.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman somewhat misuses the word "pledge" in regard to that speech. I can understand that my hon. friends on this side of the House may say that any announcement of policy I made was in a sense a pledge to them; but I cannot see how the announcement of a policy on this side of the House can be regarded as a pledge to the other side of the House. Of course, if you go to the country, as Mr. Gladstone did, saying you will do one thing, and then, when you are returned, you do something else, that is another thing. But, as far as hon. Gentlemen opposite are concerned, it is open to me at any time to say I have changed my opinions. But, as a matter of fact, I have not changed my opinions. They remain what they were, and I repeat that when I made my Edinburgh speech—I ought, perhaps, to apologise for not remembering it, but I really had not in my mind this Conference of 1906, and as I had not it in my mind it was not in any way referred to—the policy referred to was clear, and to that I adhere. There are two alternatives. The Government may be returned to office on the broad question of fiscal reform, and it may say, "We have that mandate and we are going to act upon it, and, if returned, we intend to recommend it to the House of Commons." I stated at Edinburgh that I did not think that could be done. I had not in my mind that a Conference would meet in the course of the present Parliament. Perhaps it will not. The Edinburgh policy was that any policy agreed upon by the Government should be submitted to the country, and that is the policy of the Government now. To it I still adhere.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I rise for the purpose of asking leave to move the adjournment of the House at the evening sitting on a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—"To draw attention to the statement made by the Prime Minister that the question of colonial preference will be submitted to the Colonial Conference in 1906"——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I never said that, Sir.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: "May be submitted to the Colonial Conference in 1906 before the country has had an opportunity of expressing its opinion thereon."

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had the support of the requisite number of Members, but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Deputy-Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen,

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until this Evening's Sitting.

NEW BILL.

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Alkali, etc., Works Regulation Acts, 1881 and 1892," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 227.]

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [3rd May], "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) rose to propose the Amendment which stood in his name on the Paper. He was not objecting to the appointment of this Committee, but his point was that to use the words of his Amendment, "having regard to the public statement of the Postmaster-General that under no circumstances can any alterations be made in the agreement with the Telephone

Company to which he has given his assent, this House fails to see the necessity for the appointment of a Committee to consider it."

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I may point out to the hon. Gentleman that this Amendment will not be in order. It is a direct negative, but he will be at liberty to make his speech.

Mr. KEARLEY said his objection was that while he considered it necessary that there should be a Parliamentary Committee, he objected to it being appointed with truncated powers, to it not having a free hand, and to it receiving in advance instructions from the noble Lord that it must either accept or reject this agreement. In view of the past experience the House had had, and in view of the ill effects of all the various previous agreements, he did not think that was a position which Parliament would desire to acquiesce in, and he felt he was justified in that view, because there was overwhelming evidence to show that during the whole time agreements had from time to time been arrived at by successive Postmasters-General, the House of Commons had had no opportunity of genuinely considering those agreements, otherwise much money would have been saved to the nation, and they would have had an efficient and adequate telephone system at much cheaper rates than they had now. This agreement completed an operation, part of which had already been carried out. The agreement of 1901 dealt with the buying up of the London plant—the London exchange area—and this agreement proposed to complete the operation by buying up the plant of the whole of the United Kingdom. Indeed, it went beyond that. It really included the purchase of the buildings in the London area which were not included in the 1901 agreement.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Yes, I think that is so.

Mr. KEARLEY continuing, said they had this important fact, that the 1901 agreement provided for the purchase of the London plant, and now in 1905 they had an agreement which contemplated the purchase of the whole of the plant of the United Kingdom, plus the buildings in London, which in itself meant a very large sum. It was, therefore, more necessary now than ever before that Parliament should consider with the greatest care what was going to happen under this agreement. Yet the Committee which it was proposed to appoint was to have its power restricted at this important moment. It was not treating Parliament in the way it had a right to expect to be treated. They were a deliberative body, and the noble Lord had no right whatever to say to a Committee—"Here is this agreement, take it upstairs and consider it; if you do not like it reject it; if you think you can accept it, do accept it, but you are not to make a single suggestion by way of amendment, because if you do that you will be going beyond your powers." There was another point. Supposing this Committee went to work and its deliberations occupied a long time. Supposing it did not come to some decision before the end of the session. The right hon. Gentleman told them the agreement would then come into force whether the Committee came to a decision or not. That was a most astonishing position to put Parliament in. They could not urge at this moment that there was any urgency, because the purchase agreement would not really become effective until the expiration of the licence of the National Telephone Company in 1911, so that there were six solid years in front of them, during which they ought to have an opportunity of considering this in all its bearings. This Committee, when appointed, ought to have a free hand.

Let them consider for a moment the effect of the various agreements come to between different Postmasters-General and various telephone companies. He would endeavour to review these agreements in chronological order, so that the House might appreciate the point he was endeavouring to make. Every one of these agreements, without a single exception, had had this effect, that it had worsened the national interests and bettered the interests of the telephone company. No single Postmaster-General had conserved the national interest; on the contrary, every agreement that had been made had acted definitely to the benefit of the telephone companies.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! I do not think the hon. Gentleman will be entitled to go into criticism of the agreements themselves. The question before the House is whether the Committee shall be appointed to consider that question, and he is now anticipating the work of the Committee.

MR. KEARLEY pointed out that the Committee was proposed to be appointed to deal with a particular agreement. His argument was directed towards this. If the Government put a limit on its powers, the Committee would not have the full opportunity of doing justice to the national interest, and he was using, as an illustration, what had happened in regard to previous agreements. He proposed to point out that the effect in the past of not submitting these agreements genuinely to Parliament had been bad and hurtful to the national interests.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That would be a good argument for sending this agreement to a Committee, and the hon. Member is entitled to do that.

MR. KEARLEY continued that his argument was that the powers given to the Committee were too restricted. He had not the faintest objection to the appointment of the Committee. He thought, indeed, that a Committee should be appointed and he welcomed this appointment. He would next review what had happened under these various agreements which had been entered into on this matter, and which had not been genuinely submitted to Parliament. The telephone system of this country was not one of very long standing; it was only about twenty-five years old. In 1880 the first real telephone company was formed, the United Telephone Company. In 1880 the Postmaster-General, as representing the Government, took action against the United Telephone Company, and it was successfully maintained in the Courts of Law that the telephone was really a telegraph, and consequently the use of this discovery was prohibited by the Courts. He mentioned that to show to the House what a lack of concern for the national interests had been displayed by the Government, because, after having achieved that success in the Courts of Law, the Postmaster-General, instead of taking over the business and operating it in the interest of the country, entered into an agreement with the United Telephone Company and granted them a licence for thirty years, the licence which expired in 1911, and the only consideration he got was that the Post Office should receive a royalty of 10 per cent. Now, in 1884 Mr. Fawcett, who was then Postmaster-General, announced that the policy of the Government was that there should be free competition in the telephone business, and the result was that as many as fifteen or twenty rival companies sprang into existence; but in 1901 the patent under which the telephone system was then being worked expired. That brought them down to the next agreement of 1892, the most fatal agreement into which this country entered, and he wanted to direct the special attention of the House to it. They had made a point of free competition, but under the agreement of 1892 there was created an absolutely entrenched monopoly. It was put in an unassailable position, and the Government aided and abetted that monopoly in swallowing up its rivals, and it further enabled it to make whatever charges it liked without any obligations as to supply except that it could supply where it chose. There were no terms as to the dividend to be paid, and the company did pay as much as 40 per cent., although it had been the practice to limit dividends for gas and other undertakings. The Government also secured for the company the control of the streets. It was the Post Office itself that gave the telephone company the control of the streets.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): That is not so.

MR. KEARLEY said that later on he would have something to say about the right hon. Gentleman's share in these transactions. He repeated that the agreement of 1892 wrenched away from the local authorities the power they had over the telephone company in regard to the streets.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman must come to the point. He is now fourteen years back; he must come a little more up to modern date. The House cannot go into an elaborate discussion. The question before the House is simply whether or not it shall appoint a Committee to consider this last agreement, and I shall have to stop the hon. Gentleman if he persists in his present course.

Mr. KEARLEY said the powers of this proposed Committee were restricted, and he was endeavouring to show that by restricting those powers there would be brought about a similar state of things to that from which the country was suffering now. Under the 1892 agreement, the Government agreed to purchase the trunk lines, to supply trunk lines as they might be required, and empowered the telephone company to make exchanges with various post offices throughout the country. The obligation upon the Government to construct trunk lines on behalf of the telephone company was a tremendous backing, and it was not to be wondered at that the company succeeded in swallowing up all rival competition. In evidence of that, he might say that, although prior to the agreement the capital of the company was little more than £750,000, yet within two years it had grown to £4,000,000, much of which consisted of "watered" capital.

How had Parliament been treated in this matter? His argument was that if Parliament had been taken fully into consultation much that had happened would not have occurred. The dissolution in 1892 took place at the end of June. It was not a sudden dissolution. It had been hailed from the housetops for a month or six weeks before it took place. During the last week in May a Treasury Minute was issued describing the proposals which were to be included in the agreement of 1892. A Bill was introduced and instantly got its Second Reading, and in the first week of June was referred to a Committee upstairs.

Ten days after the reference, the Select Committee reported that the responsibility for the details of the agreement must rest with the Government, but they thought that the agreement should be laid before Parliament. He thought every Member would agree that that Report bore the impression of the matters not having been considered seriously. It was a hurried transaction in a hurried Committee; there was no real Parliamentary consideration of the agreement, otherwise such an agreement would not have passed and the country would not have been saddled with the conditions of to-day. On August 11th, after the Government had been defeated at the polls, and on the very night of the division on the Asquith Amendment, which resulted in the eviction of the Government, the then Postmaster-General signed the agreement. He submitted that that was not a genuine consultation of the wishes of Parliament.

Sir J. FERGUSSON: The agreement had been most fully explained at the Table, not only by myself, but by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. KEARLEY: said he had seen many Ministers fully explain agreements at the Table after midnight, with perhaps half-a-dozen Members in the House. What he was urging was that an agreement of such far-reaching importance should be genuinely considered by a Committe upstairs without any fettering of its powers. But that was not what happened. What was the hurry in signing the agreement on August 11th? The Asquith Amendment that night brought the Government to an end. Many Members considered then, and had considered ever since, that it was a very doubtful transaction indeed. It was contested in this House by Sir John Lubbock and in the House of Lords by Lord Hobhouse, and it was to prevent a repetition of that sort of thing that he was urging that this Committee should be given untrammelled and unrestricted powers to deal with the present agreement. As a result of the 1892 agreement, there had been shackled upon the country this telephone monopoly with its inefficient, inadequate, outrageously dear system. London had had to bear the brunt of the burden, and had been exploited to the extent of 75 per cent. more in charges than any other part of the country. The natural outcome of that agreement was a great agitation throughout the country, and when the new Government came in a new Committee was moved for. The Committee was duly appointed, and it was in the midst of its deliberations when another dissolution came. It reported to the House that it had not had time to complete its investigation and that it hoped to be reappointed in the next session. It never was reappointed, and perhaps the noble Lord would explain why it was never reappointed.

Lord STANLEY: I was a member of the original Committee which came to an end—the 1895 Committee—and there was another Committee appointed. That really continued the work, although it was not reappointed as soon as we came in.

Mr. KEARLEY submitted that the Committee was not reappointed at all in the true sense of the word. No Committee was appointed until 1898. The agitation continued in the country, and many municipalities were taking steps with the idea of getting licences, because they were able to prove that they could really give a telephone service at a much lower rate. Some of them estimated that they could give the full benefit of unlimited user at five guineas an instrument, and London sent in figures to the Postmaster-General showing that they could give unlimited user at £10. As a result of that persistent agitation another Committee was appointed in 1898, over which the late Mr. Hanbury presided. Everybody regarded Mr. Hanbury as a thoroughly capable, fearless and good business man, and many Members of the Opposition held that he had not had the recognition which his great abilities deserved. The Committee recommended—

> "After reviewing the whole of the evidence, your Committee is strongly of opinion that general, immediate and effective competition by either the Post Office or the local authorities is necessary, and considers that a really efficient Post Office service affords the best means of securing such competition."

There is no doubt about that recommendation. It was clear, definite, and emphatic. What happened? The 1901 agreement proceeded from the recommendation of that Committee, and all the brave talk about general and effective competition vanished into thin air. Mr. Hanbury himself was shunted to the Board of Agriculture.

Lord STANLEY: Did he not speak on the subject?

Mr. KEARLEY: Yes, he spoke on it He accused me personally of objecting to the proposals because I wanted to get a telephone for my own selfish interests on the cheap. That was the sort of criticism that the late Mr. Hanbury directed against certain hon. Members at that particular time. The agreement of 1901 dealt with the purchase of the London plant. The Post Office itself decided to start competition, and laid down the condition that there should be free inter-communication between the two systems forthwith. But there was no real competition at all. The Post Office entered into a sort of silent partnership with this huge monopoly, and instead of the general and effective competition recommended by the Committee they made an agreement for uniformity of rates. That was to say, they bolstered up and continued rates that were already 50 per cent. higher than the necessities justified. That was the outcome of the brave recommendations of the Committee upstairs. The Post Office bolstered up the rates to the detriment of the national interest and to the great strengthening of the telephone monopoly. In the prelude to the proposed new agreement, the noble Lord stated that the House had expressed its approval of the 1901 agreement after full discussion. That was true as far as it went in a Parliamentary sense. But would the noble Lord deny that that agreement was carried on pure Party lines?

Lord STANLEY: Did the hon. Member ever know an Amendment to the Address on which the Party Whips were not appointed?

Mr. KEARLEY: This was not an Amendment to the Address.

LORD STANLEY: Yes, it was an Amendment to the Address.

MR. KEARLEY said he was not sure, but it did not matter. The fact remained that that important agreement was not left to the freewill of the House. The noble Lord's statement supported that. But why should an important question like that have been dealt with on the Address? Why was not a Committee appointed and an opportunity given, as he wished to see done now, for full, free, and untrammelled consideration of the question; with power to move Amendments to the agreement if necessary? That was the point he was now making. He submitted that the Committee about to be appointed should be free to deal with the 1905 agreement, and to amend it if it thought fit. It had no such power at present. It was prevented from so doing. It could reject or accept the agreement, but if it came to neither determination before the end of August the agreement would come into force without any expression of opinion at all. That was surely not fair. There were so many important points in the agreement, and yet this was the last opportunity that would be afforded to Parliament to consider the question at all.

LORD STANLEY: No.

MR. KEARLEY: Oh, yes.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member has no right to say that. The hon. Member has made a statement which is contrary to the fact. The Prime Minister has distinctly said that there will be an opportunity given in the House of considering this agreement.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): The Committee's Report.

LORD STANLEY: No; this agreement.

MR. KEARLEY said the noble Lord would have done much better if he had allowed him to explain. What he meant by the last opportunity was that this was the last time they would be able to consider this agreement. Did the noble Lord not see that his intervention was rather premature.

LORD STANLEY: No.

MR. KEARLEY said that there were none so blind as those who would not see. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] This was the last occasion on which it could come before Parliament because this completed the operation, and, when this agreement was got through Parliament sanctioned the buying up of everything belonging to the National Telephone Company. He never suggested that there would be no further opportunity for debating this question. He was aware that the noble Lord had stated that there would be another opportunity, but that was not the point. His point was that this discussion closed the contract, and therefore it was more than necessary that the Committee before which this agreement was going to be considered should have powers to amend it if necessary. What could be the object of purchase? Obviously to give the country an improved service and a lower rate. If the Post Office had no idea of doing that then the Government had far better leave this monopoly in its present position. The object must therefore be to give the country an improved service and lower rates. He wanted to know if the Government were in a position to do that. Upon the price they paid and the conditions they made would depend the future rates for the telephone service. If they made a bad bargain—and they certainly would if this Committee had not power to amend the agreement—either the existing rates would continue, or, upon the instigation of the Treasury, the rates would be reduced. He thought the Treasury would take good care to see that such rates were charged as would pay interest and sinking fund on the amount of the purchase money. It was to save the House from once more making a bad bargain that he was anxious that the Committee upstairs should have free and unrestricted power to deal with this matter, and that was the reason why he had put down the Amendment on the Paper which had been ruled out of order. He apologised to the House for entering so fully into this historical survey of the question, but he had done so because it was impossible for him to put the case clearly before the House without entering into these various agreements.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said there were one or two things upon which he did not feel perfectly certain. One of them was with regard to the interruption which had just been made by the noble Lord the Postmaster-General. He wished to ask him what opportunity would be given to this House to discuss the agreement between himself as Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company beyond the debate which they were having to-day? The second Question which he wished to put to the noble Lord was what powers would the Committee which they were about to appoint have in regard to this agreement? He thought he should have the noble Lord's concurrence when he said that he thought it was of great importance that this Committee should have powers to send not only for persons, papers and records, but should also have power to say whether Clause 7 or Clause 8 or Sub-clause B was a good or wise proceeding. In other words, he thought it was necessary the Committee should have the power of making Amendments. He thought it of great importance that power should be given to this Committee not only to say that they would take this agreement *en bloc*, but that they should be able to say whether they disapproved of this section or that sub-section, and generally to amend it if they thought necessary. What he felt more strongly was that this was a question of abstract justice, and he meant by that the justice of the Post Office towards the National Telephone Company's employees. He appealed to the House on grounds of justice. These women and others had been employed in the service of the National Telephone Company for a long time, and they had put their lives and training into its service. In other words, they had put their capital into this particular business because they had had to be well educated for their position. What did he read? He read in Clause 8, Sub-clause 1, that it was probable that the Postmaster-General would be prepared to take into his service a considerable number of the employees, but that he was not prepared to accept any obligation on this score, and he left the matter to the National Telephone Company. He knew that this company had paid very large dividends, but he was not aware that they had overpaid their staff. He knew there had been general complaints that they had not done this. He thought it was very hard lines upon these women who had put all their training and capital into this business that they should not be taken over.

LORD STANLEY: Perhaps the hon. Member is not aware that I accept the second Amendment on the Paper.

MR. TENNANT said he was not aware of it, and he was very glad that the noble Lord had assured the House on this point. After that assurance there was no need for him to trouble the House further.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said he was glad the noble Lord had seen his way to accept the second Amendment on the Paper, but he wished to ask him one or two further Questions. Supposing the Committee discovered that by the terms of the agreement the interests of the employees had not been fully considered and safeguarded, what power would a Committee of this House have in the matter? Would they be able to strike out words and insert others in order to safeguard the interests of the men and women concerned? He believed there were no less than 13,000 persons employed by the National Telephone Company, but at any rate there were a great number. He wished to know definitely would the Committee be able to insert in the draft agreement words to give these employees protection for their service and some guarantee for a continuance of their employment? Would the Committee be obliged either to reject this agreement altogether or take it as a whole? Would the noble Lord be able to sign the agreement just as he pleased, no matter what the opinion of the Committee might be? If so what was the use of appointing this Committee at all? He had no doubt that he intended to do the utmost he could to secure employment for these employees, but he wanted to know how far this would be possible.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the right hon. Gentleman had not succeeded in his attempt to hustle the House of Commons in regard to this matter. As a matter of fact, this agreement was practically made in February last, and now it was the 22nd of May, and this was the first occasion they had had an opportunity of even asking a few Questions upon this most important matter. He thought they were indebted to his hon. friend for pressing this matter forward, and for the historical account he had given of the negotiations which had taken place upon this subject between the National Telephone Company and the Post Office. The noble Lord told them that if they did not grant this Committee without any discussion in Government time they would not get any discussion at all, and the agreement would go through. He thought it was a pity he made that statement, because when the Government came to consider the matter, they found that they had to give them this free opportunity, but they still kept the Committee tied up. He was aware that they promised after the Committee had finished its Report that there would be another opportunity for a full discussion in the House. His hon. friend had made a request that this Committee should be left free to get whatever evidence it required in regard to this most important matter, so that the noble Lord, and the Government, and the House of Commons, could pay full attention to any recommendation that was made. He hoped it would not be understood that the Committee must accept every line in the agreement just as it stood, and that it was no use for them taking any other course. That was not the usual method of proceeding in this House. He thought that the Committee should consist of fifteen members. Originally there were only seven, but they had gradually squeezed the noble Lord and he had given consideration to the matter and agreed that the employees should be represented. He believed that these employees would not be worse off when employed by the State than when employed by the company, but that was a question which they would be able to raise in the House. The noble Lord had promised to give that matter his attention, but he thought the Committee should be entirely free and be able to go into everything that was material.

There were some large questions upon which it would be necessary to give the House more information. The first question which occurred to him was, why did the noble Lord make this agreement now? In 1904 they were anxious to know what the noble Lord was going to do, because it was then possible to have gone into the whole matter and bought out the undertaking of the National Telephone Company; and had the noble Lord done that before June 30th, the Government would have taken over the undertaking in December last. Month after month passed, but the noble Lord came to no agreement, and no notice was given in 1904 to buy out the company. After that time nothing could be done for seven years, and now they had this agreement before them. Now the noble Lord had entered into this arrangement. He wanted to know why he was tying the hands of future Postmasters-General?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not discussing the Motion before the House. He is entering into a discussion upon the agreement, and that is not in order.

Mr. LOUGH said he thought there was an understanding assented to by the Prime Minister that in this debate they would be allowed to go into the general question of the agreement. He thought a good deal could be said on the proposal that a Committee should be appointed, but he desired to bow to the ruling. They were in great difficulty with respect to this Motion to appoint a Committee, for none of them wished absolutely to oppose the appointment, but they did want to give reasons why it should be a strong and a perfectly free Committee, able to consider every part of the agreement, and to amend it in any direction they pleased.

The other point he desired to put was in regard to the interests of the municipalities in this matter. He thought the interests of those municipalities which had set up telephones of their own should be considered, and that the Committee should be able to hear evidence, and to hear what suggestions they had to make. This was not the first agreement that had been made. There were purchase clauses in all the licences granted to municipalities. He thought those municipalities would be very anxious indeed about the terms inserted here. They were much more liberal than in other cases, and especially those of Glasgow, Hull, Portsmouth, and one or two others. They were most anxious to give evidence in regard to the position in which they would be placed if this agreement should be put through, and he thought the House should have an assurance from the Postmaster-General that the evidence which the municipalities desired to tender would be freely received and freely considered. They were placed in great difficulty by the action of the Government because they did not want to oppose the granting of the Committee. Indeed, they did not think that the matter could be rightly disposed of without a Committee, but they objected to the way in which the time had been shortened. The Committee would require to work under pressure. It would have to hurry very much to get its Report ready. On that ground he would ask the Postmaster-General whether a later date than August 31st could not be adopted for the completion of the contract. It did not seem to him that there was any hurry. He hoped the noble Lord would tell them, in the interest especially of the greatest municipality of the country——

Lord STANLEY: It does not affect London.

Mr. LOUGH said that surely the 1901 agreement was modified by it.

Lord STANLEY: Not practically.

Mr. LOUGH said the matter wanted consideration. In the 1901 agreement there was no obligation to purchase any buildings or any land. [An Hon. Member: Order!] He did not think that was out of order. He was only giving reasons why the agreement should be considered without pressure with regard to time, and without limitation of the subjects to be considered. This agreement did modify the agreement of 1901 and brought in other subjects besides the purchase of plant. He thought the noble Lord should consider whether a later date should not be mentioned. At any rate he hoped he would see his way to allow all the evidence to be brought up, and that it would be fully considered, and further that any suggestions made would receive the sympathetic consideration of the Government.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he did not desire to detain the House at any length, but he should like to ask the noble Lord what powers the proposed Committee would have in the matter of receiving evidence from the commercial community. If it could not receive such evidence the Report of the Committee would not have the value which otherwise it would have. That was his view, and he hoped the noble Lord would correct him if he was wrong. Recently he took part in a debate as a member of the Associated Chambers of Commerce. In the discussion there was considerable difference of opinion among commercial men as to the telephone agreement. After all it was the commercial community who were most concerned in the telephone service. He was at the annual meeting of the Trades Protection Association in London the other day, and this agreement was discussed. The opinion of the Chambers of Commerce, and of the Trades Protection Association, and commercial men generally, was really the opinion which ought to be taken into account in the settlement of the question, for, after all, it was more a commercial question than anything else. Another point he desired to bring before the noble Lord was this. He had been waited upon by a deputation, and he had received many communications with respect to the staff. Although the time was far distant when the Government would take over the telephones a large number of the staff were very anxious to know how they were going to be circumstanced under the new agreement. It appeared to him that it would be unwise to approve of this agreement without consulting the commercial class, and, after all, Parliament was the representative, or was supposed to be the representative, of the whole community. Undoubtedly the commercial class were precisely the people who used the telephone, and they could give very useful evidence in regard, not alone to the further utility to which the telephone service could be devoted, but also with regard to the way in which this transfer ought to take place, and the terms on which the existing plant could be taken over and utilised. He did not wish to go further into the matter at present. He was obliged to the noble Lord for the concession which he had already made when he accepted a portion of the Amendment.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he did not know whether it was that he misapprehended the meaning of hon. Gentlemen opposite, or whether it was that they misapprehended the character of the Committee, because he noticed repeatedly it was suggested that the Committee should have power to amend the agreement. It was not possible on the part of the Committee to amend the agreement. [An Hon. Member: Why?] Might he explain to hon. Members that a Committee, whether a Select Committee, or Committee of the Whole House, was a Committee to which the House had committed a definite matter for consideration, and no Committee, not even a Committee of the Whole House, had power to do more than report to the House for the House's decision. They could not give a Committee of this House absolute powers.

Mr. TENNANT: You give your Select Committees power to alter Private Bills. Is not this the same sort of thing?

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said the hon. Member was perfectly right in regard to Committees on Private Bills. These were judicial bodies, and they had power to come to judicial decisions. But that was not the case with a Select Committee of this sort, or with a Committee of the Whole House, which made alterations in Bills. No doubt their decisions were generally accepted and generally final, but, after all, they might be altered on Report. All that a Committee could do was to report to the House, and upon that Report the House might act as it pleased. It might accept or reject the Report of a Select Committee. It was impossible to conceive that this Committee should have power to amend the agreement. What the Committee was appointed to do was to consider the agreement, and to report whether it was desirable in the public interest that it should become binding as it stood. When the Committee had so reported, it would be for the House to accept or reject the Report, or differ from the Committee. The House was not bound by the Report of the Committee. Hon. Members opposite seemed to think that the Committee had the power of amending, which it had not. It seemed to have the power of calling any witnesses it pleased on the point it had to consider. Meantime, as he understood the situation—and he believed he understood it rightly—it was this. There had been signed, conditionally he supposed, by the Postmaster-General, what was at this moment an inchoate agreement, and it was only proposed that a Committee—a most proper Committee to be appointed, and he hoped it would be appointed without difficulty—should be appointed to consider whether the agreement should become binding. It seemed to him that the powers of the Committee would be adequate for the purpose for which it was appointed. The terms of reference were sufficient, and if the terms of reference were such as to enable the Committee to cut the agreement into little bits he should think that a very dangerous reference indeed to make to the Committee. He only rose to remove what seemed to him a slight misapprehension as to the functions and powers of the Committee.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he thought the noble Lord had been misunderstood, and that it was his intention that this Committee, when appointed, should have the agreement sent to it, and that the Committee should have all the powers and privileges which any similar Committee possessed. This House might give the Committee power "to send for persons, papers and records," and if that was so perhaps the noble Lord would say, if the Committee should report recommending some alteration in the agreement, what position this House would be in then when it considered the Report of the Committee. He thought the noble Lord had always endeavoured to be very fair with the House. He remembered last year that he raised this question when the Postmaster-General was asking a grant of £3,000,000 to extend the telephones. The noble Lord gave a very definite pledge. He said that he did not wish to be bound with regard to the form, but he pledged himself that the House should have every possible opportunity, so far as he could arrange, for considering the agreement, and that no agreement should be binding on the Government until it received the assent and ratification of the House. That brought him to a very important point. He thought the House was generally agreed that there should be an acquisition of the telephones, and it was merely a question of terms. What the House was concerned in principally was to get the best possible terms, and he asked the noble Lord, if they agreed to the appointment of this Committee, and if it recommended an alteration in the agreement, what position would the House be in in considering the Report of the Committee.

Lord STANLEY said the hon. Member had stated that he had rather left the House in the dark on certain points. He wished now to clear up these matters for the House. He would explain what his position was in the matter. Last year the only obligation he came under was that before the agreement became binding this House should have the opportunity of saying "Yea" or "Nay." He said at the time that he thought probably the best way would be for the House to appoint a small Select Committee which would take evidence and submit their Report to the House. He thought the House could not possibly do otherwise. He thought it was the best way then, and he thought it was the best way now. The House should have an opportunity of saying "Yea" or "Nay" to the agreement. Even if he had the power to limit the powers of the Committee, it would be absolutely against his intention to do so. He wished the Committee to be a Select Committee, on exactly the same terms as every other Select Committee. [An Hon. Member on the Opposition benches: That is all we want.] He desired it to make the fullest inquiry that might be necessary and then report to the House. His hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn had put the case better than he could—viz., it was not in the power of the Committee to alter the agreement. They might make recommendations if they liked; and these recommendations would come up to the House in the same way as the Report of any Committee, and then the House would have to consider whether or not these recommendations, if adopted, vitiated the agreement. For his part he would have to consider whether he could go on, in view of the recommendations, with the agreement, seeing it could only be accepted as a whole. If hon. Members had been under a misunderstanding, he apologised.

The hon. Member for Islington asked why an agreement should be now come to. Everybody wished to see the matter brought to a satisfactory conclusion. They did not wish in 1911 a hiatus with no telephone company, and that would be obviated if this agreement was ratified at once. At the present moment a great deal of the complaint against the National Telephone Company was due to the fact that, apart from London, there was no interchangeability between the two systems. A message on the Post Office system could not be taken for the National Telephone system, and *vice versa*. The instant this agreement came into operation that would cease; and as a business matter that should appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite.

The hon. Member for Rugby, he thought, was under some misapprehension as to how far this agreement would affect the employees of the National Telephone Company. What he had endeavoured to secure in the agreement was that the rights of the National Telephone Company's employees should be satisfactorily adjusted up to the time they became Post Office servants. It could be no part of the agreement between the National Telephone Company and the Post Office as to what the Post Office should do with these employees after the undertaking was transferred. It was impossible five or six years beforehand to say whether A., B., or C. would be efficient at a particular date; but he believed that every single man and woman now employed by the National Telephone Company, who was certified by those best able to judge, viz., their superiors, to be efficient in 1911, would be taken over, and necessarily taken over. He pledged himself and his successors to take over the bulk of these employees, but not every individual.

Mr. TENNANT said that the noble Lord had said that if the Committee recommended Amendments to the agreement, these would be considered by the House; but the noble Lord had not said whether it would be in his power to say whether any particular Amendment should be adopted.

Lord STANLEY said that that would be quite impossible. He had signed a particular agreement and could not alter it. If the House said that, in view of the recommendations of the Committee, they disapproved of the agreement as a whole, the agreement would drop to the ground.

Mr. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said there was no doubt that the Committee had no power to make Amendments to the agreement. They could consider the whole agreement and might say what were its good and its bad points, and how the latter could be improved. He was very suspicious of some of the terms of the purchase agreement, having regard to what took place at the meeting of the National Telephone Company. However, the noble Lord the Postmaster-General had clearly stated on a former occasion, and had reaffirmed it that day, that the agreement would not become binding unless the House ratified it. But that was not altogether carried out by the last clause of the agreement, and it was important that the discussion should not come to a close without a distinct understanding that, notwithstanding the difficulties the last clause might produce, the Government would carry out the spirit of the undertaking of the noble Lord.

Lord STANLEY said he gave the hon. and learned Gentleman the assurance that the House should have an opportunity of saying "Yea" or "Nay" to the agreement before it became operative.

Mr. BLAKE said that that was so far satisfactory; but he would point out that the agreement would become binding on August 31st if not disapproved of by Parliament before that date. He supposed by "Parliament," the House of Commons was meant.

Lord STANLEY: Oh! yes.

*Sir CHARLES DALRYMPLE (Ipswich) said that this was an agreement between two parties; not with the Post Office alone, but between the Post Office and the National Telephone Company. The right hon Member for Wolverhampton, who was chairman of the National Telephone Company, he thought should have been in his place, and might have been appealed to by the hon. Member for Islington quite as fairly as the Postmaster-General had been appealed to as to any change in the time in which the agreement was to come into operation.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that those on his side of the House were anxious that the House should have a full and free opportunity of deciding upon the policy of the noble Lord in entering on this agreement and the terms upon which that policy was to be carried out. In view of the past history of this company it was necessary that, before a decision was finally come to, the negotiations for the agreement should be discussed in the full light of day. He understood that the noble Lord was now willing to allow suggestions to be made by the Committee.

Lord STANLEY: I always was.

Mr. DALZIEL said he was very glad to hear it. He understood that the policy of the noble Lord was that the Committee could say "Yea" or "Nay" to the agreement; that the Committee were empowered to call witnesses in regard to certain portions of the agreement; and that if, in the course of their investigations, it appeared to them that Amendments ought to be made to it, they were powerless to make those Amendments.

LORD STANLEY said he had distinctly stated that the Committee could recommend alterations, and that that was all the Committee could do.

MR. DALZIEL said they were always glad to have something given by the Minister in charge of a Bill which was worth having, but he was not going to take something from the noble Lord after a Committee had sat which would be worth nothing whatever. The question was whether it was desirable, in the public interest, that this agreement should be sanctioned. There was no suggestion here about new proposals or fresh terms, or anything of that kind. The one point on which the Committee was to give judgment was not whether or not this agreement should be altered, but to say "Aye" or "Nay" to the agreement. What was the Motion that would be put before the House? It was that the Select Committee's Report be adopted, so that when this agreement came back to the House the House would not have any authority to alter a single stop or comma in it. The noble Lord, who made this agreement on behalf of the Government, would make it a vote of confidence in himself, which would mean that they could not give a vote which would at all imperil the continuance, so long as his Party was in power, of his tenure at the Post Office.

When the proposal was made last year to send this agreement to a Select Committee, he spoke immediately after the noble Lord, and assented to it, because he thought the Committee would then investigate the whole matter before a definite decision was arrived at. But now, after it came back from the Select Committee, every Member of the House would be denied the opportunity of making any Amendment to the agreement, because the noble Lord had said they must take it or leave it, for the recommendations which the Select Committee would make to the noble Lord would not give sufficient opportunity to the House to discuss it. In a matter of this kind the public thought that the immense Parliamentary influence of the persons involved in an agreement of this kind allowed them to make terms which ought to be very fully and completely inquired into, and the House, as the matter at present stood, had not sufficient opportunity to do that. In the ordinary acceptation of the word "Select Committee," this House would imagine that such a Committee would examine into both sides of the argument and make a Report; that they would call witnesses as to the merits and demerits of the proposal contained in the Bill, and would be able to alter the Bill or they would be able to present a Report without looking at the Bill at all. Then there was a Select Committee to which a Bill might be referred, which could alter every clause of the Bill if they chose, so that it did not do for the hon. Member for King's Lynn to say they could not appoint a Committee to deal with this agreement in any way. This House could give a Select Committee power to deal with any one of the clauses or with the whole of the clauses of this agreement exactly in the same way as reference might be given to a Select Committee to deal with any Bill.

A further reason why they should be careful was that the whole agreement was based upon what was called the tramways arrangement, it being altogether forgotten that the tramways had a continued monopoly and that this telephone company had to stop on a certain date. So that there was and could not be any comparison whatever. Now what he desired to come to was this, the noble Lord apparently was willing to listen to suggestions from the Select Committee. He was willing that this agreement should go to the Select Committee and that any suggestions they made should be considered in the House. In his opinion that would be a Parliamentary procedure for which there was no precedent whatever. There was no precedent for a Committee making suggestions as to Amendments and making no Amendments. He wished the noble Lord to keep an open mind upon this matter and not to make it a matter of confidence, a condition of things which would leave them in a very much freer position than they were at present. Therefore he proposed to add after the word "agreement" the words "with such Amendments if any as may be deemed expedient." It might be that no Amendments would be required at all, but what was the use of all this? What was the use of having a Select Committee to strengthen the right hon. Gentleman as to his policy if that Select Committee was not to be allowed to alter or amend any particular clause in the agreement? He might have perfect confidence in the agreement he had made, but even then he would be consoled by the fact that he would have a majority of his supporters upon the Committee. Therefore he submitted that the noble Lord ought to be able to accept this Amendment. Such a thing would add great force to the recommendations of the Committee, and he firmly believed it would save much time when the recommendations came back to the House. He asked the noble Lord to accept this Amendment, which involved a very important question of policy. As they stood to-day no one would be satisfied that sending the agreement to a Select Committee would be of any use whatever without power being given to that Committee to alter it. To send it to a Select Committee without such power as that would be a farce, and therefore he appealed with confidence to the noble Lord to accept his Amendment and shorten the discussion. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 5, after the word 'agreement,' to insert the words 'with such Amendments, if any, as may be deemed expedient.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said it appeared to him that there was a grave doubt whether, under the terms of reference as they stood, it would be in the power of the Chairman of this Committee to carry out the pledges of the noble Lord. They had all heard those pledges, and, so far as he was concerned, with one exception, they were satisfactory. But the moment the Committee was set up the power of the noble Lord to redeem his pledges was gone. He had no power over

the Committee, and supposing the Committee proceeded, in pursuance of the pledges the noble Lord had given, to consider the suggestions made by the Committee in their recommendations, the Chairman of the Committee might say the terms of reference did not contemplate any Amendment and therefore they were out of order. Where was the noble Lord then? He would be under pledges to this House, but his power to redeem those pledges would be absolutely gone, and he would find himself in this House in the position of a person who is denied the facility to redeem pledges which he has made with the best will in the world, and there would be no remedy. The last clause of the agreement would come into force because the House of Commons would be asked to decide this matter without hearing those recommendations which the Committee wished, but were not allowed to make, and if they did not decide then the agreement would come into force after August 31st whether they sanctioned it or not. Therefore it was necessary to see whether the terms of reference made it binding on the Chairman of the Committee to carry out the pledges given by the noble Lord. That was his first point, and the words of his hon. friend below him had that for their object.

He passed to another point of some importance in regard to which one pledge of the noble Lord did not satisfy him. What the Committee was called upon to do under the terms of the reference was to recommend alterations in this agreement. He did not agree with his hon. friend below him on one point, and he did agree with the noble Lord that it would be against all precedent to give, if it were possible to give, to a Committee upstairs the power of altering this agreement. The thing was not practicable, because an agreement was an agreement between two parties, and the moment the Committee upstairs altered the agreement then that agreement was at an end, because unless the other party agreed to the alterations it was no longer the agreement that was entered into. Therefore, the demand to allow the Committee upstairs to alter this agree- was an impossible demand. What they wanted was this: They wanted full power, and they wanted it made clear in the terms of reference given to the Committee, to recommend alterations in the agreement.

That brought him to his second point, where he disagreed with the noble Lord. He did not think the Committee ought to be compelled by the wording of the reference to report whether "on the balance" they thought this agreement ought to be accepted or not. He objected to that. He thought they ought to be allowed to report in any of three ways, either whether "on the balance" the agreement ought to be annulled, or that it ought to be accepted in the public interest, or they ought to be allowed to make an open Report saying that, in event of certain alterations being made which they recommended, they would recommend that the agreement be accepted. Under the terms of reference as they now stood they would not be allowed to do that. Why should not they be allowed to make such a Report, because that was the Report which he thought they ought to be allowed to make, namely, that they were in favour of the agreement being made with the telephone company in the public interest, but not on the terms of the present agreement. Then the agreement would be altered and would go back in that form to the telephone company and the telephone company, with all the chances before them, would agree to accept the modifications suggested by this House, or go a long way in that direction. Why, then, should the Government tie up the hands of the Committee, and thus give warning to the telephone company that they only had to stand firm to get what they wanted. He claimed that the terms of reference were most skilfully drawn so as to turn the proceedings of the Committee into an absolute mockery, because the Committee of the House of Commons, after the recommendations of the Select Committee were brought before them, were tied to two great alternatives, either to destroy the agreement altogether, or to accept it with all its faults. The Committee might hesitate greatly in the public interest, and say, "We will accept it;" but, on the other hand, were they to tell the Committee to devote weeks of labour; to examine witnesses with great expense; to make a series of recommendations, but to wind up their inquiry by the adoption of the agreement, and thereby stultify themselves? Because, did anybody suppose that the telephone company, with such a point in their hands, would ever take the trouble to read over the recommendations of the Committee under such circumstances?

They were engaged on a very important discussion which might mean millions to the public of this country. These great contracts were very serious matters. He did not profess to know anything about this matter, and it was not in the least necessary that he should know anything about it, but it was a very technical matter, and the House ought to proceed cautiously because of that fact, and because it involved a question of millions. He had heard it stated that if this matter were carefully considered, and the principles, even of the tramways terms, applied strictly to this bargain, that the telephone company would get £2,000,000 less for their interest. He did not know if that was true, but, in any case, the House ought to be very careful in regard to anything in respect to which such a statement could be made, and it should do its best to get the best terms possible. He did not blame the noble Lord, because he had done the best according to his judgment; all he said was that the House should have a word in the matter; but, because the noble Lord had made what he thought to be the best terms possible, he had drawn the terms of reference in such a way as to make the labours of the Committee absolutely nugatory. He suggested that the noble Lord should leave it open to the Committee to send down to the House what he called an open Report to the effect, if they held that opinion, that they considered it extremely desirable in the interests of the public service that the telephones should be bought up, and that on certain lines and terms which they suggested they would agree to the purchase. But if those terms were not made then they agreed to make no recommendations.

Sir CHRISTOPHER FURNESS (Hartlepool) said he personally knew nothing about this matter, but he had noticed in the papers first on one day that the contract between the Government and the telephone company had been made, and then that the shares of the telephone company had gone up. Then a day or two afterwards that statement was contradicted and it was said that the shares had gone down. The hon. Baronet on the other side of the House had informed the House that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton was the chairman of the telephone company. That was news to him, but the hon. Baronet then complained of the absence of the right hon. Gentlemen in this debate. He should have considered it would have been in very bad taste if the right hon. Gentleman had been in his place on this occasion, and he commended him, if he were connected with this company in any way, upon his absence that afternoon. It would have been very much better if others had also been absent. He had heard certain insinuations with regard to this matter and he called them most unworthy insinuations, because he declined to believe that any Gentleman in this House had acted in this matter in any way unworthy of the best interests of the State. It seemed to him that this Amendment might be withdrawn if the noble Lord would agree to a suggestion which he ventured to make. It was perfectly clear to any business man that the terms which had been entered into could not be varied by any Committee upstairs. It was quite clear that it was within the province of that Committee to make alterations in this provisional agreement which would not be in any way binding on the Telephone Company. Both sides must agree, before it could be a binding agreement, but it did seem to him that the difficulty might be easily got over. Let them assume that this Committee recommended that the noble Lord should see the telephone company and made certain suggestions; the noble Lord should consider those suggestions, and after the Committee had reported, place himself in communication with the telephone company, and if he was unable to obtain any modification in this provisional agreement, he should give a pledge to this House that the agreement should not become binding on August 29th, but that the House should have an opportunity of discussing this matter.

Lord STANLEY: The hon. Baronet could not have been in the House when I was speaking, for what he has asked for I have already offered.

Sir CHRISTOPHER FURNESS said he did not understand the noble Lord to give such an undertaking as that, but if he had done so he was satisfied.

Lord STANLEY here interjected a remark which was not heard in the gallery.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he had taken part in a good many discussions in connection with this agreement with respect to the telephone company. He had opposed all these agreements because it always appeared to him that for some reason or other the company always got the best of the public and the Post Office. But if the noble Lord would accept the suggestion of his hon. friend he thought this agreement would be most desirable and it would be very desirable to see it carried out. The hon. Member for Mayo pointed out that the noble Lord was not entirely free in this matter. They had not only to deal with the noble Lord but also with the telephone company itself. The company had its agreement, a most unfair agreement, he thought, so far as they were concerned. It was to continue its existence until 1911 and then it was to be bought under certain conditions. It was admitted that it was injurious to the public that the telephone company should act under that agreement until the year 1911, and therefore he thought it was most desirable that they should come to some arrangement with the company to enable the service to be freer before then than it was at present. His hon. friend had proposed this Amendment. The words were as follows, "With such Amendments, if any, as may be deemed expedient." He presumed his hon. friend meant that he would have the agreement taken clause by clause, and that Amendments should be moved one by one on those clauses.

Mr. DALZIEL said he recognised that as the agreement was a provisional one it might be inconvenient to take it clause by clause, and he would alter his Amendment by making it "suggested Amendments."

Lord STANLEY: I could not accept that.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said the question was that Amendments might have to be taken on the agreement itself, and he did not see how that would be possible or how it could be dealt with in the agreement itself, and he did not see how his hon. friend could deal with the matter at all by way of suggested Amendments. The Committee would look into the matter and discuss it, and then issue their Report, and then what would be done would be to move Amendments in this House on the Report itself. He thought it could be done under the Motion itself. But if there was any doubt on the matter, then he suggested to the noble Lord that if he thought it might be desirable that any of the recommendations should come before the House as the recommendations of the Committee, they might add these words, or words in this form, "either in its accepted form or in any form in which it is suggested by the Committee." That was the ground of objection.

Lord STANLEY: It is the same thing.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said it was not quite the same thing. The House would have to receive the Report, and, assuming there were certain suggested alterations, the noble Lord would have to consider those suggested alterations himself, and if he were of opinion that it was desirable that they should be made, he would go to the company and say, "You hold us perfectly fast; you may say that I have made a provisional agreement subject to ratification by the House; but I think the suggested alterations are sound, and I submit it to you whether in your own interest, and in the interest of the public, it would not be desirable that you should give your assent to them." But as the agreement stood, the company could refuse its assent; and he wanted to make it as easy as possible for the noble Lord, to whom he thought the House owed a debt of gratitude for the agreement he had come to. The company had on previous occasions been very difficult to deal with; it had always been in favour of its pound of flesh, and it had the power now to stand up for and to insist on its pound of flesh, much to the harm of the country, until the year 1911. He gathered that the noble Lord wished the Committee to be able to make recommendations; that being so, there being many Members on that side of the House who did not think it would be possible under the present wording of the Motion, he hoped the noble Lord would accept such words as he had read out, or words tantamount to them, so as to make the matter clear.

Lord STANLEY desired to make his position perfectly clear. As representing the Post Office he had made the best agreement that he possibly could—in his own opinion at all events—in the interests of the country, and he believed that that agreement was the utmost that they could expect, but he wished to be fortified with the opinion of a Select Committee of the House. The proposed Select Committee had the full powers which appertained to every Select Committee; it would be able to declare what its opinion of the agreement was, also in what part, if any, it thought the agreement defective. That power belonged to every Select Committee and he was neither adding to nor taking away from it. When the Committee had considered the question it would make its recommendation as to whether in the best interests of the country the House should accept the agreement or not, giving its reasons. He had not the slightest pride in this matter, and if he found that his judgment had been wrong, and if the Committee found that he had been wrong, he would not hesitate to say so to the House of Commons. He would then let the agreement drop, as he could do by means of a vote of the House of Commons, and commence *de novo* with a new agreement.

He really thought that that was all the House of Commons ought to ask him to do. Personally, he believed that the Committee would find that this agreement was in the best interests of the country, and he could not accept the Amendment.

MR. McCRAE said the noble Lord had just stated that this Committee would have full powers, but they on that side of the House were afraid that those powers were somewhat circumscribed by the terms of the reference.

LORD STANLEY: No.

MR. McCRAE said that was where the difference of opinion came in, and he suggested, in order to make it clear that the Committee had full power to consider the whole matter, that the noble Lord should strike out the words after "report" in order to insert, "as to any recommendations thereon." That preserved the attitude of the noble Lord, and it would also meet the wishes of hon. Members on that side of the House.

MR. LOUGH said he would not be surprised if they were at a complete agreement, but they on that side of the House felt, whether rightly or wrongly, that if the reference was maintained in its present wording the Committee would or might be restrained from making a full examination of the subjects which this agreement raised. They only wanted to be sure that the Committee would be quite free to examine the whole question and to make whatever Report it pleased, and he thought that if from the end of the reference there had been omitted the words "and to report whether it is desirable in the public interest that the agreement should become binding," the matter would have been nearly all right.

MR. DILLON: "To report thereon" simply.

MR. LOUGH said that if the words had been "To consider and report on the proposed agreement" they would have taken no objection at all. Ultimately the House of Commons would have to decide this matter; but they would not have the necessary information to enable them to give a full judgment upon the question unless the Committee was left perfectly free. They wanted the Committee to examine the agreement from every standpoint, and to look at the telephone question from every standpoint, and then to make a wide and open Report. If the noble Lord would make the matter entirely open they would be satisfied, and the debate would come to an end.

LORD STANLEY said that if the present Amendment were withdrawn, and the House would agree to it, he would be willing to insert words so that the reference should read, "and to report as to any recommendations thereon and whether it is desirable in the public interest that the agreement should become binding." That would be inserting the the words suggested by the hon. Member for East Edinburgh. For his own satisfaction he desired the Committee to say whether they considered it desirable in the public interest that the agreement should become binding.

MR. DILLON said that was exactly what he objected to, as it was making the matter in the Committee a question of confidence in the Government, denying to the Committee the power to give an open Report. They would then get, not the true mind of the Committee, but only the mind of the noble Lord's supporters.

MR. KEARLEY suggested that it would meet the views of the Opposition if the noble Lord would leave out all words after "report" and insert "thereon."

MR. DILLON said that would not do at all. The noble Lord wished to retain the words "whether it is desirable that the agreement should become binding." The agreement was the noble Lord's agreement, and he wanted to force the Committee to say whether or not they approved of his agreement. That was what the Committee ought not to be forced to do.

LORD STANLEY said that for his own satisfaction and justification, he must ask the House to keep those words in. If there were any words he could add which would give a third alternative he was perfectly ready to put them in, but he must insist on retaining in the Resolution the words "whether it is desirable in the public interest that the agreement should become binding."

Mr. KEARLEY: With recommendations.

Lord STANLEY: I am quite ready to put in "and any recommendations thereon."

Mr. DILLON: The noble Lord does not see my point.

Lord STANLEY: I quite see the point of the hon. Member. That is where we differ.

Mr. DILLON asked whether it amounted to this—that the noble Lord objected to leaving it to the Committee to give an open Report.

Lord STANLEY: No.

Mr. DILLON said the retention of these words did not leave it open to the Committee. Under them the Chairman and the Committee would be bound to bring up a Report for or against the noble Lord's proposal, and he would not allow the Committee, even if they wished to do so, to give an open Report saying——

Lord STANLEY: We seem to be nearly in agreement.

Mr. DILLON: But still it is an important point.

Lord STANLEY: The words are—

"Whether it is desirable in the public interest that the agreement should become binding with or without modification."

I will read it to the House. I do not know whether the hon. Member will then withdraw his Amendment. It will then read—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of February 2nd, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report as to any recommendations thereon; whether it is desirable in the public interest that the agreement shall become binding with or without modifications."

Mr. DALZIEL said that under the circumstances he should be willing to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question amended, in line 4, by inserting, after the word "Report," the words "as to any recommendations thereon," and in line 5, by adding, at the end of the Question, the words "with or without modifications."

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words, 'and also whether the interests of the employees of the National Telephone Company have been duly considered.'"—(*Mr. Luke White.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Lord STANLEY: I accept the addition of those words.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report as to any recommendations thereon whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding, with or without modifications, and also whether the interest of the employees of the National Telephone Company have been duly considered."

"That Mr. Benn, Lord Bingham, Sir Horatio Davies, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Helme, Sir William Holland, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir Charles Renshaw, Colonel Royds, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley be nominated Members of the Committee." — (*Lord Stanley.*)

Mr. DALZIEL said he noticed that the Government had two more Members on this Committee than the Opposition had, and as a rule in such Committees the Goverment only had a majority of one. He thought the noble Lord might be satisfied with having a bare majority of his own supporters on the Committee. He raised this objection upon Lord Bingham's name, but he did not object to Lord Bingham any more than any other member of the Committee. He thought the Government should be content with one more, and in view of the importance of this matter he suggested that the noble Lord should take one of his own supporters out. He might take out any one he pleased.

Lord STANLEY: I do not know exactly what the right proportion on this Committee is between the two sides, but if I find that the proportion is wrong——

Mr. DALZIEL: It is.

Lord STANLEY: I am not sure that it is, but if I find that it is so, after consultation, I shall prefer to add one more to the Committee from the opposite side.

Mr. DALZIEL said he should be perfectly willing to accept that. If the noble Lord counted the Irish Members as members of the Opposition he would find that the Government had a majority of two. He begged leave to withdraw his objection.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Three be the quorum."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Mr. DALZIEL said that with regard to the question of three being a quorum——

Lord STANLEY: I am quite ready to make it five.

Mr. LOUGH said this was a most important matter and——

Lord STANLEY: If the hon. Member does not accept five I am ready to stick to three.

Question, "That Five be the quorum," put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Agreement of the 2nd day of February, 1905, between the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, and to report as to any recommendations thereon whether it is desirable in the public interest that the Agreement should become binding, with or without modifications, and also whether the interests of the employees of the National Telephone Company have been duly considered.

Mr. Benn, Lord Bingham, Sir Horatio Davies, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Helme, Sir William Holland, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir Charles Renshaw, Colonel Royds, and Mr. Stuart Wortley nominated members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum. (*Lord Stanley.*)

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said the Amendment he wished to propose was to leave out the word "levied" in line 18 of the first clause. His object was to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer the reason why that word was inserted. It seemed to him, in effect, to be a question more or less of verbiage. In a Bill of this kind it was important that every word should be carefully considered, and they did not want a word inserted which they did not know the definite meaning of. It was not a question of a few pounds being dealt with, because this Bill dealt with millions of pounds. He wished to know whether the word "levied" was a word of any service, and whether it was necessary for it to be inserted at all. In ancient times lawyers used to be paid by the number of words they could insert in a deed of conveyance and they used to get as many words as possible inserted which meant exactly the same thing. The word "levied" had fallen into desuetude and they did not want it continued in Acts of Parliament. He had searched for definitions of the word "levied" and he found that it meant "raised." If the word "raised" were put in he thought the word "levied" would not be required. In Clause 4 they found that certain rates were not to be charged any longer, and it only stated that they should cease to be "chargeable" and not "leviable and payable." He begged to move

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 18, to leave out the word "levied."—(*Mr. Soares.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'levied' stand part of the clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said he hoped the hon. Member would not think it necessary to press this Amendment. The form of words embodied in the clause were those which had been uniformly used in finance legislation for many years past. It was not used in connection with the income-tax because Section 26 of the Act of 1896 shortened the income-tax clause and provided that the income-tax should be "charged, levied, and paid." The same meaning was attached to the single word "charged." He did not think there was much substance in the addition of the word, but as it had always been used in Acts of Parliament there might be inconvenience caused by its omission, because it might be argued that the House of Commons meant something different when the old form was used. The form adopted was the form which had appeared in every Finance Act for the past ten years. He hoped the hon. Member would agree that it was not quite a reasonable or necessary Amendment. He therefore suggested that they should adhere to the words which were customary, because any departure from them might be assumed to imply a difference of intention on the part of the House. He thought it would be a mistake to alter the custom, and consequently he could not consent to do so. He hoped the Committee would not spend much time over very minute points of this character.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the acceptance of this Amendment would seriously alter the Bill.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said he had often heard it said that they ought not to pay any attention to good grammar in Acts of Parliament. If the words "charged and levied" were satisfactory in the case of the income-tax why should they go on for generations using this bad grammar. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to strike out all unnecessary words.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said if the right hon. Gentleman was right in stating that there was a definition in an Act of the nature indicated, surely the correct way to proceed would be to extend that definition to the tea duty, and not have a differentiation between one tax and another. His hon. friend's Amendment, if carried, would bring that about.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 214; Noes, 159. (Division List No. 168.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W.(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George

Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich.Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Bowles, T.Gibson(King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J. (Birm.
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar,Sir T.R.(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes,Rt.Hn.Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B(InvernessB'ghs
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon.George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene,Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Rt HnLordG(Midd'x
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris,F.Leverton (Tynem'th)
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords.,N.W
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence,Sir Joseph(Monm'th)
Lawson, Jn.Grant (Yorks.N.R.
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W.(Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,Sir Lewis(Edinburgh,W
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,Rt Hn SirH.E(Wigt'n
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie,Rt.Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith, Rt. Hon. J. P. (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley,Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart,Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent,Col.Sir C.E.H(Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col. A.C.E(Taunton
Welby,Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley(York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd,Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams

Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Soares and Mr. Barran.

MR. FLYNN moved the omission of the words "or Ireland" in line 19, in order to exclude Ireland from the operation of the proposed tea duty of sixpence the pound. His object in making the Motion was two-fold—firstly, in the interest of the poorer classes of Ireland, and secondly, because this was the proper Parliamentary way to propose a differentiation between the amount of tea duty in Ireland and the other portions of the United Kingdom. If this Amendment should be carried, he would move another Amendment to provide that the tea duty in Ireland should be threepence the pound. While his proposal would commend itself to Irish Members, he hoped it would not be distasteful to British Members. In the first place Ireland was a country where tea was very largely consumed by the working population who were extremely poor; and therefore Ireland felt the burden of this tax more than either Scotland or England. Not so many years ago there was a school of thought, which included a large proportion of the population of these islands, in favour of a free breakfast table—a school which was supported by one of the greatest Finance Ministers of this country. But since then they had travelled far in an opposite direction; for now there were heavier duties on all the elements which constituted the spread of a breakfast table, such as tea and sugar, except the loaf of bread, than there had been for a long period. The Irish people had always protested against the tea duty being imposed upon them. The pious aspiration for a free breakfast table had not been realised, and in an opposite direction the cry had gone up to broaden the basis of taxation. That meant, of course, that the load of taxation was to be taken off the shoulders of those best able to bear it and put on the already over-weighted backs of the poor. If that were true in regard to this country, how much more in regard to the working population of Ireland. It would be easy, he contended, to make out a case for the entire exemption of Ireland from tea duty.

The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for West Bristol, used the argument that the high duty on tea should be maintained because it was necessary to raise taxation in order to meet the enormous expense of the late South African War, and that the working classes who had steadily supported that inglorious and wasteful campaign by their votes and every other manifestation of their feelings ought not to complain of an increase of the tea duty. But that argument did not apply to Ireland or to the Irish people. Therefore, they were justified in protesting against the tea duty when it was raised from 4d. to 6d., and from 6d. to 8d. They acknowledged that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken heart of grace and reduced this duty from 8d. to 6d. per lb., but the duty was still too heavy; and he claimed that Ireland had a strong and overwhelming case for total exemption from the tea duty.

He had no doubt they would be told that to exempt Ireland from tea duty would involve the setting up of separate Custom-houses in Ireland and Great Britain. He did not acknowledge that. For many years the tea duty was collected in Ireland by the Excise authorities and not by the Customs. If spirits could be moved from one country to the other by the Excise authorities, tea could be moved in exactly the same way. There was, therefore, nothing in the separate Custom-house argument. Tea was moved in bulk in the same manner as spirits and it could be followed to where it was consumed and the duty imposed there. The chests could be marked in a certain manner and it would be impossible to smuggle it in large quantities. At the present moment there were countries where there was a heavy duty on tea, but ladies who were fond of an afternoon cup of what was called English tea—of course it was not English tea—were allowed to take small quantities of tea into those countries; but the Custom-house authorities did not allow them to take in large quantities in bulk. Therefore the difficulty which might be raised by the Treasury and by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the exemption of Ireland could be easily surmounted. Irish Members had at present to complain of the Customs and Excise authorities who took very little trouble to trace the movement of articles of trade and consumption between Ireland and this country; and if they wanted to ascertain the volume of trade between Ireland and Great Britain they were told it could not be given. The mere fact that it was difficult was no argument against the attempt being made to ascertain it. The officials of the Customs were not so overburdened with work that they could not devise regulations to prevent smuggling or illegal transit of tea between the two countries. For the reasons stated he contended that Ireland was entitled to this exemption; and he begged to move.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) seconded the Motion of his hon. friend the Member for North Cork. The main justification for the proposal was the vital fact stated to the House the other day, that while in this country the proportion of direct taxation was 48 to 52 of indirect taxation, the proportion in Ireland was 25 per cent. of direct taxation and 75 per cent. of indirect taxation. These figures showed how, by the system of so-called equal burden, Ireland was overweighted. For long years after the principle of equal burden had been accepted in this country they were told of its injustice to the poorer classes of England and that direct taxation should at least be equal to half of the whole taxation, if not more than half. But in Ireland the classes which paid indirect taxation contributed 75 per cent. of the whole, and that in itself condemned the English system of taxation as applied to Ireland. The same system of taxation when applied in one country might be just and even generous to all classes in that country which was prosperous in its trade; but it might be cruelly unjust to the population of another country which was poor. Taxation was applied to Ireland which was only suitable to Great Britain; then mitigation was tried; but yet the House would not agree to any difference of taxation as between the two countries because it might involve the erection of Custom-houses and other impediments to trade. There, again, arose the difference between England and Ireland. They had learned in this country that the more the impediments to trade were removed the more the people flourished. No such lesson was learned in Ireland. The great principles of free trade had not brought prosperity and wealth, but ruin and misery to Ireland. All Irish affairs were considered and settled, not in relation to the circumstances of the Irish nation, but to the circumstances of another nation altogether. Hon. Members opposite admitted all that; but yet they said they would not consent to break up the United Kingdom and introduce separate tariffs. They argued that a reduction in the duty on tea would involve separate Custom-houses. It might involve a small amount of inconvenience; but it was not true to say it would involve separate Custom-houses. His own impression was that separate Custom-houses as between England and Ireland only ceased to exist in 1820. The duty on whisky, which was a very important Irish export, differed in the two countries down to 1860; the difference being much greater than that now proposed in the case of tea. Whisky was a product of the country; and the danger of smuggling was therefore infinitely greater than in the case of tea, which was not grown in Ireland; and which it was easy to see was not exported.

He admitted that a certain amount of inconvenience would be involved if the Amendment were accepted. For his own part, he would be prepared to adopt a different method; namely, that a portion of the revenue collected should be returned to an Irish body responsible to the Irish people for the benefit of the poor of the country, not in a demoralising way, but in order to develop the resources of the country. That would, however, be impossible until there was a body responsible to the people; and as long as there was no such body to control the expenditure the money would certainly be wasted. Therefore, they were stopped on that line. They now, however, were proposing a specific remedy; namely, that the huge injustice of the undue burden of indirect taxation in Ireland should be mitigated. The difficulty in connection with separate Custom-houses had been greatly exaggerated; but, in any event, the Government were bound to take some steps to obviate the injustice. That was the first duty of the Government.

He believed that a great deal of the misfortune of Ireland was due to over-taxation. It was an enormous difficulty; and he regretted that the House did not realise the extent to which it had kept the people in poverty and discouraged enterprise of every kind. It was an admitted experience in the history of nations that there was a certain point of over-taxation which rendered it absolutely impossible to accumulate wealth or successfully carry on trade or manufacture. They in Ireland had been prevented from accumulating wealth from the fact that among other causes taxation was out of all proportion to the taxable capacity of the people. It was very difficult for Englishmen to appreciate that view. In Ireland a million sterling of over-taxation should be multiplied thirty or forty times as regarded England; and the over-taxation of Ireland by £2,500,000 represented something like £90,000,000 in England. Would not that be considered a serious matter even for a wealthy country like England. Only the other day the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol declared that he felt the greatest foreboding at the increase of taxation and expenditure in this country. What must be the opinion of a man who applied his mind with a sympathetic spirit to Ireland. In that country taxation had doubled in fifty years, whereas the wealth of England had increased at least tenfold during that period. Ireland, on the contrary, was poorer to-day than it was sixty or seventy years ago; and although the wealth of the country had decreased its taxation was trebled. A case such as they were making was not met by silence or by voting it down. It was a question of principle, and the Government were bound to produce some scheme which would give some hope to the Irish people.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 19, to leave out the words 'or Ireland.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed "That the words 'or Ireland' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. ELLIOT (Durham) said that easy communication between Great Britain and Ireland had enormously improved during the last seventy or eighty years. That Dublin and Belfast should get any amount of tea they wanted free from taxation and that Liverpool and Glasgow should pay 6d. per pound more for their tea, and that in the absence of all Custom-house restrictions between the two countries, was an impossible suggestion. Every grocer would naturally go to Ireland to obtain his tea, so as to retail it in this country at an enormous profit. They should consider the relations, not only between one financial entity and another, but between one man and another, and it would not be just that the inhabitants of Dublin or Belfast should pay 6d. per pound less for tea than the inhabitants of Liverpool and Glasgow.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said it was absolutely essential to reduce the tea duty as far as possible in Ireland, because of the present condition of that impoverished country. It could not be too often repeated in the House that to the Irish people generally, the mass of whom were the poorest and worst fed people in Europe, tea was the first necessity of life. Although a great deal was heard in the House of the evils of intemperance and the measures suggested for the prevention of that great and crying evil, the Government would not do that which, above all, would do most to promote temperance in Ireland, namely, make tea cheaper. There should not be any difficulty about it, seeing that the Minority Report of the Childers' Commission found that in the matter of taxation England and Ireland were separate fiscal entities. It was absurd to say that they were to regard the peasant of Connemara as being in the same position as a rich yeoman of Yorkshire, and it was forgotten also that at the time of the Union Ireland was altogether independent of Britain, that the very Union was based on the idea that there was to be a separate system of taxation, and that, even in 1816 and 1817, it was expressly provided that abatements and exemptions should be had in respect to particular things which were affected at the time. Even in 1860, as had been pointed out, there were separate duties. The duties of the two countries were not assimilated on any grounds of convenience of collection, but on general Imperial grounds. It was quite possible to put heavy penalties on any person who tried to smuggle tea from Ireland into England, and since they had to pay a heavy bill to the Treasury it was not too much to expect that they should provide officials smart enough to stop smuggling.

It was most unjust to ask Ireland to pay an extra 2d. in the £ on account of the South African War, out of which they got nothing. The indirect taxes of Ireland in ratio with the direct taxes were as 75 to 25, and it had always been the policy of this country to assimilate and make equal as far as possible the direct and indirect taxation. The taking off of 2d. on tea would not reduce the indirect taxation to the level of direct taxation, but it would go some way towards it, and he thought the argument that it could not be done because it would be troublesome to manipulate was most unjust. So far as he was concerned he would vote for a reduction of 4d. on tea all round, but if that could not be done there was no reason why Ireland, which suffered much more than the rest of the country from this imposition, should not be relieved. He should support the Amendment, and in doing so considered he had advocated nothing that was impossible to be obtained, and that it would only be a measure of justice that Ireland should be considered in this matter.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he would not repeat the arguments which he put forward when discussing the general question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, nor would he argue as to the amount of inconvenience or cost to traders on both sides of the Irish Channel that would be involved in the execution of such a proposal as had been made. Under the Amendment he thought the cost, inconvenience, and danger to the revenue of this country would be much greater than hon. Members opposite had been inclined to allow. He did not propose to argue this question at length, because, even if it were shown that there was no force in that practical objection, he still held that this was not a proposal he could accept, or that the Committee would be wise in adopting. The hon. Member for East Mayo said that it was clear that a system of taxation which was just in one country was not necessarily just in another country. That was an obvious principle which no one would dispute, but they were not now considering general questions of taxation, but a particular tax, *i.e.*, the tea tax. If tea were an article of exclusively Irish use, and if some other beverage were substituted for it by the English people, he should think there was some substance in the contention of the hon. Member for East Mayo; but tea was used as much per head of population in Great Britain as in Ireland. It was used by the poor in this country just as much as by the poor in Ireland. It was said that it was monstrous for them to suppose that the poor Connemara peasant was in the same position as the rich gentleman in Yorkshire; but it was equally absurd to tell them that the poor dwellers in the East End of London were in the same position as the rich Irish farmer. They could not take the rich of one country and the poor of another country and compare them.

The hon. Member for East Mayo argued that a much larger proportion of the taxes of Ireland were borne by the indirect taxpayer than was the case in Great Britain. This was true, but it did not follow that the amount of indirect taxation collected in Ireland was greater per head of the population than in England. The contrary, of course, was true, and the contribution of direct taxes per head of population in Great Britain was greater than in Ireland. The contribution per head of population in Ireland was not greater, and the tax was not greater; and he could not be a party to the suggestion that they should have one rate of taxes in Ireland and another and heavier rate of taxes for the same class of people in this country, and support this to the country at large on the ground that relief was needed for the poor of Ireland. If relief were needed, let it be given to the poor man everywhere and not single out one particular country for relief in this respect.

Another statement had been made in the course of the debate that, owing to this and other high taxes, capital had been prevented from being invested in Ireland, and that the accumulation of wealth in that country had been arrested. Anyone who had given a little attention to the matter would come to the conclusion that there were other courses more potent in deterring the investment of capital in Ireland. They would all be glad to see more capital invested in that country in fruitful occupations, but he did not know on what ground the hon. Member for East Mayo suggested that the accumulation of wealth in Ireland was less than in England; at any rate, there was evidence that amongst the poor there had in Ireland been a steady accumulation of wealth, for there had been a steady growth in the amount put into the Post Office Savings Bank, larger, he thought, in proportion than the growth that had taken place in Great Britain. This certainly did not lend colour to the statement that taxation was pressing more heavily on the poor in Ireland than on the poor in this country. He could not be a party to this or other proposals to set up two different systems of finance for two parts of the United Kingdom. No such proposal had ever had any support from his predecessors in recent years, and he did not imagine it would receive any support from the Party opposite.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that if the contention that this matter was one for the individual, and not one in regard to which the two countries should be looked at as separate nations were sound, there was an end to the question for ever. He submitted, however, that such a treatment of the question was incorrect, inconclusive, and unjust. It was easy to say that the poor man in both countries should have the same consideration, but the generalisation was not entirely true. For instance, no one would suggest that the population of India could bear the same taxation per head as the people of Great Britain. The contention of the hon. Member for Durham was sound only when the historic, social, and economic conditions of two countries enabled a fiscal unity to be created. How could Gentlemen entirely drawn from Great Britain be expected to deal justly with the principles of taxation which should affect another and a different country? An Englishman named Pitt, created the Union, but it was subject to certain conditions. The Irish case was that those conditions had never been fulfilled and that the bargain which Pitt made ought to be kept. He noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that none of his predecessors had entertained the claim which was now made by Ireland, and then he added the word "recently."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Gladstone did not entertain it.

Mr. LOUGH said he gave up Mr. Gladstone at once. The last understanding Chancellor of the Exchequer on this question was Sir Robert Peel. He knew the case and the obligations with which he was bound. The bargain made by Mr. Pitt was that equal taxes should not be demanded; that for every £1 an Irishman paid, £3 10s. should be paid by an Englishman, and that for every £1 paid on tea by Irishmen, three and a-half times as much should be paid by Englishmen, until the wealth, population, and commerce of Ireland should enable a change to be made. The English kept the accounts and consequently they were able to make the condition true with regard to debt, but not with regard to wealth and population. If this arrangement was so simple and just, why was it that under this fiscal system the one Island of Great Britain had always flourished while the other was ruined? The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not appear to have got accurate information upon this question. Cocoa was used twenty-five times as largely in Great Britain as in Ireland, and coffee nearly ten times as largely in proportion.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the consumption of tea in this country was as great and a little greater than in Ireland.

Mr. LOUGH said they must take into account these tea substitutes. Let them take two countries like France and England. The French would not care about a tax being placed upon tea, because they drank very little, but if they were to put a tax on coffee England would not be affected so much as France. At the time of the Union Ireland had a population of 12,000,000, and the taxes amounted to £1,250,000. Now the taxes amounted to £10,000,000 and the population had gone down to 4,000,000. That was the effect of the working of this cruel system which the hon. Member for Durham thought was not open to any criticism, and which the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge had blessed. Something must be wrong.

A great deal of nonsense had been talked about Custom-houses. He considered that they would have to restore the Custom-houses in Ireland, even if they had to alter the taxation, because without them they could never discover the economic facts which affected any country. He was surprised that the hon. Member for Durham should speak of the difficulty which would be created by tea being smuggled across the Channel. That difficulty did not exist in regard to whisky which Ireland could produce at 1s. per gallon, and which was worth 10s. or 12s. a gallon when it reached this country. There would be no difficulty in carrying out this change in regard to Custom-houses. Take tea. Would less tea be used in Ireland if it were let in free than with a duty of 6d. per lb. The great

British interest in tea was that everybody should drink plenty of it. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Hon. Members laughed, but he wished to point out that tea was mostly grown in British territory and was conveyed in British ships to this country, and the Irish people displayed their loyalty in this matter by drinking mostly Indian tea. He thought the Irish people were only doing their duty by pointing out these inequalities. There were poor women in Islington, but it should be remembered that the burden of taxation in Great Britain was adjusted by conditions which did not exist in Ireland. That was seen by the Return which was published the other day in regard to the wages of agricultural labourers. The same wage could not be got in Ireland as in England because the economic conditions were different. We might levy the same tax on tea in Ireland, but we could not create the same condition of ability to pay the tax. Until we made the people of Ireland as wealthy as in Great Britain it was unjust to put the same tax on Ireland. The question whether the difference could not be adjusted by reducing the tax ought to be seriously considered.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said that while there were, no doubt, difficulties in making the proposed differentiation of the tea duty, these difficulties had been grossly exaggerated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and by the hon. Member for Durham. "Where there's a will there's a way," and if this House wished to act in a just way it could carry out the suggestion contained in the Amendment. Ireland was a country in which the poorer class largely drank tea. He regretted it, because he thought they could find better substitutes for their diet. If the people used more cocoa or coffee it would be better, but things must be taken as they were at present. Before the famine, when they largely fed on vegetables, they were mentally and physically a finer people than at present. It was notorious that the tea consumed by the poor people of Ireland was of a very much better quality than that consumed in the poorer districts of Great Britain. While there was great poverty in Great Britain as well as in Ireland, it should be remembered that the poor here were very much better able to bear taxation than in Ireland. At the present moment thousands of men were employed in Mayo on relief works and the highest wage they received was 1s. a day. Thousands on the western seaboard were, he would not say on the brink of poverty, but actually in a state of famine, a heavy gale last year having caused a failure of the potato crop. He ventured to say that the unemployed here would reject the wages which were paid to the men engaged on public relief works in Ireland.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: You are not in order in going into the question of the unemployed.

MR. POWER said he merely mentioned that as an illustration of the incapacity of the average poor man in Ireland to bear a tax which might be imposed on the people of this country. In considering the question of poverty in Ireland they should recollect that enormous sums had come into the country from America. But for that assistance the people would be very much poorer than they were. The old arguments against the claim now made on behalf of Ireland had been trotted out to-night. There was no use in comparing the poor of Ireland with the poor of Yorkshire, because the cases were entirely different. Since the Union the poor people of Ireland had suffered much at the hands of the richer people of this country who had violated the terms of the Union when it suited them.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said the argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that while the tax fell heavily on a portion of the people of Ireland it bore equally heavily on, say, the poor people of the East End of London. That argument had already been dealt with by some of his colleagues who had pointed out that the conditions in the two cases were absolutely different. When they spoke of the poor people of Ireland they did not speak of isolated cases, but of the overwhelming majority of the population. He had in his hand a report which had been circulated by Lady Dudley, the wife of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, who had had brought under her notice the conditions of extreme poverty which existed in the

West of Ireland. He was sure such conditions did not exist even among the poor of the East End of London. In the West of Ireland families of twelve persons were to be found living in cabins of one room. From a Government Report recently issued he found that the meals on which the agricultural labourers in Ireland lived were: Breakfast, bread and tea; dinner, bread, tea and potatoes; and supper, bread and tea. Upon such meals they had to live and do their heavy work. That was the reason why the Irish representatives asked for a reduction of the tax on tea. That pointed to the great truth that a tax upon tea was not a tax upon a luxury, but upon a necessity of life. It must not be imagined for one instant that the Irish Members had no sympathy with the poor in this country and that they would not be glad to see the tax removed in Great Britain also. The objection to that came from the benches opposite. The removal of any tax on tea was very popular in other portions of the Empire; indeed, there were parts of the Empire in which a tea tax did not exist and where, if the Government attempted to reimpose it, they would lose place and power. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, trying to make an argument against the position the Irish Members had taken, said that the deposits in the savings banks in Ireland were growing. Admitted, but who were making these deposits? The police and other officials generally. The deposits in the country districts were not growing. The poor people in the West of Ireland had not money enough wherewith to buy the necessaries of life, much less to put it away in a bank. Another objection they had to the tea tax was that the Irish people had not sanctioned the war which necessitated this expenditure.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The question before the House is the tea duty, and not the late war.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN said he accepted the Deputy-Chairman's ruling and protested once more against the imposition of the tea tax in Ireland.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said that the arguments brought forward by hon. Members opposite went a long way to show how unfair and unsuited to Ireland was the system of taxation which had been adopted in this country. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Islington, who seemed to speak as if this system had been adopted in order to get money out of Ireland. That was not the case. The system had been adopted simply because we had not in our fiscal principles given any consideration to Ireland whatever. Of course, it was perfectly true that the poor man in this country was oppressed by taxation as much as the poor man on the other side of the Irish Channel. But the poor man here had the compensation which was derived from the general prosperity of the country; and, therefore, he contended that the present system of taxation did press with special force on the poorer class in Ireland. The proposal to set up separate Custom-houses between England and Ireland did not seem to him necessarily out of the question; for, after all, Custom-houses were made for man, and man was not made for the sake of Custom-house simplicity. But he attached considerable importance to free commercial relations between different parts of the country in the interests of unity. Take the German *Zollverein*——

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is a debate on the tea duty.

Mr. PARKER SMITH said he was trying to deal with the argument which he understood to be one of the main points against the Motion before the Committee, viz., that it would involve the setting up of separate Custom-houses between England and Ireland. Custom-houses were objectionable, but what was infinitely of more importance was good feeling between different parts of the Empire; and if they were to insist upon unity between England and Ireland, then it was important that the predominant partner should do what the predominant partner in the German *Zollverein* did, and, instead of establishing a system which did good to the strongest and harm to the weakest, be content, for the sake of the political ends it had in view in the future, with a system under which the strongest men suffered very considerable pecuniary loss, while at the same time securing the advantage of the growth of unity of feeling. While he agreed that the burden of the tea duty fell especially heavily on Ireland, he did not think the Amendment was the way to secure a remedy. What he would advocate was a reduction all round of the duties which pressed especially hardly upon Ireland, and the placing of the burden on the general imports of the country.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not in order in pursuing that line of argument.

Mr. PARKER SMITH said that while he thought the burden of taxation on tea in Ireland was too heavy, he was convinced that the present proposal was not the way to remedy the evil.

Mr. DILLON said that he had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for the Partick Division with the most intense interest. The hon. Member met their protest in a very fair and sympathetic spirit. The financial grievance under which Ireland suffered was due to the fact that the system had been constructed without any reference to that country. The system was based on the interests of a rich manufacturing country and pressed most cruelly on a poor country like Ireland. He hoped there would be another opportunity of discussing the question.

Mr. FLYNN said he wished to protest against the Chancellor of the Exchequer repeating fallacies which had been exploded again and again. The poor man in Ireland was oppressed by this taxation because the amount of poverty in that country was almost infinitely greater than in England. His hon. friend suggested it would be better to substitute cocoa, chocolate, or coffee; but if these articles were used, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted money for another Mullah Expedition he would immediately double the duty. The existing system, in his opinion, disclosed a deliberate intention as against Ireland on the part of the Treasury.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that the reply of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was exceedingly disappointing. More tea was consumed per head in Ireland than in England; and in the circumstances the Chancellor of the Exchequer might very gracefully assent to the proposal embodied in the Amendment. He urged that not only from a temperance point of view, but even from a humanitarian standpoint. Tea was the main beverage in the South and West of Ireland; beer being scarcely used at all. He hoped in the circumstances the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider his decision. It would not cost the Government much. There was a higher standard of taxation than that of the mere establishment of a separate Custom-house. The poor had no right to be taxed to the same extent as the rich; and that was the difficulty in Ireland.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 234; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 169.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole

Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inverness B'ghs
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords., N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. Grant (Yorks., N.R
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Rt. Hon. J. P. (Lanarks
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES

Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph

Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sB'ghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, SirFrancisH.(Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Furness, Sir Christopher
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hutchinson, Dr.Charles Fredk.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal,W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col.John P.(Galway,N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, John Wynford
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie(Dumfries
Richards, T. (W. Monmouth)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Field and Mr. Flynn.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10) (COLONIAL PREFERENCE).

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I rise for the purpose of moving the adjournment of the House in order to obtain information for the House upon a subject of the very highest importance. I am struck by the fact that when I have occasion either to originate a Motion or to make a speech in this Parliament it always takes the form of a desire and a demand for information. But usually we have been provided with some obscure, philosophic utterance which requires explanation; it is not so on this occasion. The matter which I shall bring, and which has been brought to-day before the House is perfectly plain, and what we want, and I think what we are entitled to, is a definite answer to definite questions on matters of fact, and therefore I am glad to say that my part in this debate will be really that of laying before the House the short and simple story of what has occurred.

As matters stand, a statement has been made to-day by the Prime Minister which seems to us, and I think will seem to most people without much further explanation and light, irreconcilable with undertakings given by the Prime Minister and accepted by the country a few months ago. I go back, Sir, to August of last year. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham brought up the question of our commercial and fiscal relations with the Colonies, and expressed his strong opinion that the subject was ripe for some definite decision on the part of the Government, and a strong desire to learn what information the right hon. Gentleman could give as to the policy of calling a conference. A day or two afterwards the Prime Minister showed his estimate of the position in which the matter then stood by saying that he did not propose to take any steps at the present moment on the subject. So the matter was left at the end of last session. But a very few weeks passed and there was a change apparently in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman, because early in October, before the usual interchange of amenities between politicians in the autumn commenced, the right hon. Gentleman, to the astonishment of everybody, and as much to the astonishment of his own supporters as to that of anyone else, organised an opportunity for himself in Edinburgh in order to unburden himself of his opinions on the fiscal question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham was going to speak two days later at Luton. I do not know whether there was any connection between the two occasions, but I noticed that the Member for Birmingham's engagement was of long standing, whereas, as I have said, the right hon. Gentleman—I cannot imagine with the view of forestalling his right hon. friend, but for some reason or other—came in in front of him on this occasion at Edinburgh Now, Sir, that can only have been done—this sudden creation of an opportunity—for the purpose of a serious declaration of policy. I mean that must have been one of the main objects, and it appears to me to be so from the references that are made to what he said, and that he himself has made to what he said on that occasion. I have here in my hand, in order to be sure of being accurate, a publication called "Handy Notes on Current Politics," a monthly *vade mecum* for Conservatives and Unionists, and a very short passage which I shall read in that speech, the only one which really concerns the question which I am putting before the House, is this—

> "My view, therefore, is that the policy of this Party should be, if we come into power after the next election, to ask the Colonies to join a conference on these lines [which he had described], a conference whose discussions shall be free, but whose conclusions shall not commit any of the communities concerned to any larger plan of Imperial union on fiscal or other lines unless their various electorates have given their adhesion to the scheme."

The House will observe that this involved two elections. The next election after the date of his speech and then, if they came into power after that, they were to ask the Colonies, having obtained the assent of the country to that part of the policy, to join a conference on this subject. That was very unmistakable and clear, and it meant, of course, as I have just said, that the country would be consulted before this conference took place, and so it was understood by the right hon. Gentleman, and so, no doubt, a very closer observer of all the words that fell from the Prime Minister understood it, for at Luton, on October 5th, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham welcomed the speech and the sentiment of the right hon. Gentleman on the general question, but he said—

> "I cannot understand what is the necessity for a second plebiscite, involving as it would do two mandates, two general elections on the same subject, coming within a few months of one another."

Afterwards he says—

> "I have thought it right to mention that as the only blemish which I see in a plan which in all other respects I heartily welcome."

Then I come from October to January, when the right hon. Gentleman was at Manchester and the day after he made the speech in which he read the well-known half-sheet of notepaper, he said—

> "If the scheme which I have many times recommended to the country, and which last night I repeated in a succinct and unmistakable form, if that scheme were carried out, I do not see that the country could be called upon to decide the colonial aspect of this question until not only one, but two elections have passed."

That is a confirmation by the right hon. Gentlemen after a couple of months had passed of the impression created by himself universally through the country, and acknowledged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham. Let us go on to March 8th when the hon. Member for Oldham moved a fiscal Resolution in this House. What did the right hon. Gentleman say on that occasion? He referred again to the speech that he made at Edinburgh, and to the words I have quoted in that speech being as fair and categorical as any words could be. He says—

> "That was one element in the speech which I made at Edinburgh, and what was the other element? It was an appeal to the country in the face of the controversy raging on the fiscal question to discuss our colonial relations in a free conference. I do not believe that my statement on that subject was a bit more ambiguous than my statement on protection. It was clear, it was definite, it was complete, and it was because in my judgment the Resolution moved by the hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House flies in the face of that second part of my speech made in Edinburgh, that in

my opinion all who were good enough to accept the policy I recommended to the country ought to support me this evening."

Here again the House will observe, in January, he boasts of the clear and complete and definite language he had used on this very subject, and I have quoted to the House that clear and complete and definite language, and the House will see that it involved the fundamental principles that there was to be an election and a submission of the case to the country before the conference was held. Now let me move forward to April 11th. On that date there was a debate on the same subject in another place, and on that occasion I think the most instructive thing to quote was what was said by the Duke of Marlborough, he being the official mouthpiece in the other House of the Colonial Office—

> "The policy of the Government," says the Duke of Marlborough, "which had been carefully defined by the Prime Minister was, if they were again returned to power at the next general election, to summon a conference at which representatives of the various self-governing Colonies and of India would be asked to attend."

I think that these quotations are almost enough to show that the right hon. Gentleman represented to the country that his distinct decision was to refer this fiscal question to a conference which should be specially called for the purpose, and at all events which should not have the question referred to it until after the people of this country had assented to that course being taken. But I find that on another day, a very short time before the date of the last quotation, my hon. friend the Member for Kincardineshire put a Question to the Prime Minister, and it was in these terms:—Whether,

> "In the event of the Colonial Conference which meets in 1906 taking place before a general election, the question of Imperial unity on a basis of preferential duties on colonial produce will be submitted to it."

The Question was—If the conference comes off without a general election preceding it, is the question of Imperial unity on a preferential basis to be submitted to it, and to this the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The hon. Gentleman is probably aware that we have over and over again stated that in the course of this Parliament we propose to take no steps."

—No steps—

> "With regard to fiscal reform."

It will be observed it is "We take no steps in this House in the course of this Parliament." ["We."] Yes, he speaks for the Government. Then my hon. friend the Member for Barnstaple asks the First Lord of the Treasury—

> "Whether the British representatives at the Colonial Conference to be held in 1906 will have power, subject to the subsequent approval of the House, to negotiate a scheme of preferential trading on the basis of taxation of food and raw material."

The right hon. Gentleman said he answered that when he replied to the hon. Member for Kincardineshire, so that he gave the "go by" to the Question of my hon. friend the Member for Barnstaple. But my hon. friend came back to the charge, and the Prime Minister replied—

> "We are not dealing with that question."

Then my hon. friend the Member for Aberdeen, seeking to clear the matter up, pointed out that the Question referred to the question outside Parliament in the Colonial Conference, and the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have over and over again said that in the course of the present Parliament we do not propose to deal with the fiscal question."

Now all this time the country was led to believe, did believe, and was justified in believing, that two elections, one to approve of the conference and the other to approve of the decisions of the conference, would be taken; the policy of two elections and two mandates was the working basis of all the descriptions given us on the subject and was the bulwark against any sudden alteration of fiscal policy. Now the right hon. Gentleman excuses himself by stating, in the course of a rapid cross-examination—it is not easy to bear in mind all that happened, but I have refreshed my memory from the reports in the evening papers—I understand he has excused himself on the ground of forgetfulness, that the meeting was to take place in 1906 escaped the right hon. Gentleman's notice. Well, small blame to him for that. It was quite possible on October 3rd; but months passed—November, December, January, February, March, April, May—and all that time the right hon. Gentleman leaves the country, leaves his supporters, leaves his opponents under the impression that there were to be two elections, with what the right hon. Member for Birmingham has called a "double mandate"; but although he knew that was an error—I am assuming it as he says—he allowed the country to be deceived, and his friends and those who were somewhat suspicious of his policy to be deceived, by the words he had used and which did not represent what he meant. There was little reason why he should forget it all this time, all these seven months, because on one occasion, February 15th—my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick, speaking here, asked the Colonial Secretary point-blank, not thinking there was any misunderstanding about it, whether what the right hon. Gentleman had called the automatic conference would be held, and the right hon. Gentleman asserted that it would be. Therefore I do not think the Prime Minister can have been for a long period in ignorance, though I make this concession, that at the time he made his speech at the rapidly-organised meeting at Edinburgh he may have forgotten this somewhat important fact; and yet he had ample time to refresh his memory and inform himself; in fact, he could not fail to have been made aware of all that happened; but not until now, May 22nd, do we hear that he has made a mistake after all, that a conference to decide the question is to be held next year without any election.

Do not let us confuse two things which are totally distinct; two separate undertakings have been given, one that there shall be no proposal in this Parliament having the effect of departing from free trade, and with that we have no concern this evening. It is not before us; and the other is that a Colonial Conference which would discuss the question of preference and food taxation would not meet in the course of the present Parliament, and not until the country had been consulted and had the opportunity of pronouncing an opinion whether a conference with that object ought or ought not to be held. That pledge repeated, as I have shown, is a pledge that cannot be disowned; and it seems to me, so far as we are at present able to judge, it has been repudiated to-day. Can it be that the right hon. Gentleman has changed his opinion and his policy? We wish to know what the reason is. The right hon. Gentleman is not altogether to blame for not paying too much attention to the Press; he sometimes receives somewhat sinister advice from the Press. Here is what a leading organ, writing of the pledge, the *Daily Telegraph*, says ["Oh, oh!"]—I see the interruption comes from an Ulster Member not initiated in the arcana of tariff reform—

> "A pledge, alike in politics and ethics, must be construed according to the circumstances in which it is given. At the time the Prime Minister gave his undertaking, few believed it possible, not even the right hon. Gentleman himself, that there was any likelihood of the present Parliament completing its normal term of life, but circumstances for which the incompetence of the Opposition"—

have hon. Members sunk so low in their own estimation that they are pleased to hear that it is not to their merits, but to the incompetence of the Opposition, that their prolonged existence is due?—

> "For which the incompetence of the Opposition is responsible, have changed the prospect, and what seemed impossible last year becomes not only possible but probable."

I do not do the right hon. Gentleman the dishonour of supposing that he followed that advice or used that excuse. I have, as I promised, made a plain and simple statement of the facts, and I make no comment on them; I await the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman. It is an important matter we are dealing with, the fiscal policy of the country and our relations with the Colonies; but it has a far higher importance than that, because if it is proved that the country has been thus misled, what we have to consider is what is the effectual means for preserving the dignity and character of pledges given by the Prime Minister and the honourable traditions of our public life. I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington) rose to address the House, but was received with loud cries of "Balfour, Balfour," "Let him defend himself," "An insult to the House," "Let him defend his own honour," "Sit down," "Take it as read," "He wants to speak when he cannot be replied to," "Order," and "Chair."

After some minutes—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I appeal to hon. Members on that side of the House. ["No, no!"] The question of the Colonial Conference surely comes within the province of the Colonial Secretary. ["No," "The Prime Minister's personal honour," and "Order."] I have no doubt whatever the Prime Minister will speak ["When he cannot be answered"], and that there will be an opportunity of replying to him. ["No."] It is a very unusual precedent to prevent the Colonial Secretary speaking.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I rise to a point of order. You have remarked, Sir, that it is without precedent——

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member rise to a point of order?

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: Yes. As you have referred to precedent I desire to ask whether you can point to a precedent of a Prime Minister's honour being challenged when he has not at once risen to reply.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

MR. LYTTELTON again attempted to speak, but his words were lost amid cries of "Balfour," "Sit down," "We don't want to hear you," and "Order."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I must appeal to hon. Members to give the right hon. Gentleman a hearing. [NATIONALIST cries of "Police, police."] Might I be allowed to point out that the precedent would be a very dangerous one. If you make it impossible for right hon. Gentlemen on that side to be heard, it is equally possible for that to be done in the case of right hon. Gentlemen on the other side.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: He has no authority to speak for the personal honour of the Prime Minister.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Obviously the result of that would be a very undesirable one and not to the credit of the House. The Prime Minister has intimated that he will speak.

MR. CHURCHILL (Oldham): I am quite sure there would be no indisposition to hear the right hon. Gentleman if the Prime Minister——

The hon. Member, being unable further to make himself heard, left his place below the gangway, and, proceeding to the side of Mr. Speaker's Chair, was understood to say that the House would hear the Colonial Secretary if the Prime Minister would undertake to make a statement himself after the right hon. Gentleman had spoken.

MR. LYTTELTON again unsuccessfully essayed to speak, his opening words being once more drowned by cries of "Balfour," "Play the Game," "Send for the Horse Guards," "Time," "Personal honour," "Are you going to stand there all night?" and "Sit down."

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) rose.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member rise to a point of order?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I do. The Leader of the Opposition having put a Question to the Prime Minister and asked for an explanation of the statement made by him, of his own words, I submit, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, quite respectfully, that the House of Commons is entitled to an explanation from the Prime Minister.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member is perfectly right, and I have not the least doubt in the world that the Prime Minister will give an explanation. [" When ? "] There may be other hon. Members who desire to ask Questions of the Prime Minister, and if the Prime Minister answers at once he will be debarred from giving any further answer. [" No."] I would appeal to hon. Members to allow the debate to proceed. [" Balfour."] I would give an assurance, if it were necessary, that the Prime Minister will speak in time for a reply. I heard an observation from one hon. Member that no reply would be permitted. I will give the assurance to hon. Members that they will have an opportunity to reply to the speech of the Prime Minister.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: No Member got up on either side of the House after the Leader of the Opposition. The only Member who did get up was the Colonial Secretary, who presumably did not propose to question the Prime Minister, and I submit—[An hon. Member: That is not a point of order.] May I further say that even if other Questions were asked in the course of the debate, no Prime Minister has ever been refused, by the leave of the House, an opportunity of answering any Question put to him ?

Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER: It is usual that Motions should be seconded. In this case there was no seconder. Owing to the position of the right hon. Gentleman I did not think it necessary to ask for a seconder. Still it is quite possible that some other hon. Members may wish to supplement what fell from the right hon. Gentleman. [" No."]

Mr. LYTTELTON again rose, but was unable to proceed further than to say, " I am perfectly willing——"

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): On a point of order, Sir, I call your attention to the fact that the hon. Member for Northwich is calling out " Police, police."

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): May I interrupt to make an appeal to both sides of the House to allow the Colonial Secretary to proceed ? This is a debate which is of very great public interest. No doubt it affects the declaration of the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister, I have no doubt, will make his own explanation; but it also affects—and in my judgment that is the more important issue—the whole policy of the Government; and I am much more concerned to know what that policy is, and whether the right hon. Gentleman is right in supposing that the Government's policy has been modified. [Cries of " Speech."] I merely wanted to appeal to the Opposition to listen to my right hon. friend. I am anxious to know whether the Government policy has been modified, what the Government policy is, either from the Colonial Secretary or any other member of the Government. The personal question can be dealt with afterwards by the Prime Minister.

Mr. LYTTELTON again attempted to address the House, but without success.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): Nobody asked you to answer the Question.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): On a point of order, Sir, may I through you appeal to the Leader of the Opposition to ask his followers to allow the debate to proceed? [OPPOSITION cries of "Appeal to the Prime Minister."]

MR. CHURCHILL: May I through you, Sir, appeal to the Prime Minister to relieve the House from this position by making the explanation that is demanded of him?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): May I suggest that you send for the police and clear the House?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I had the pleasure of being removed by the police. Is it not the turn now of some of the gentlemen of England to be removed?

MR. DILLON: Why is not the same treatment good enough for you which was good enough for us? [Cries of "Send for the police."]

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Why does not the Prime Minister answer?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): May I appeal to you and ask you whether, for the credit of the House of Commons, the time has not come for putting in force the new rule for the suspension of the sitting. Unless that is done the duty devolves upon the Prime Minister, for the credit of the House, to at once respond to the appeal which has been made to him to speak [OPPOSITION cheers and MINISTERIAL laughter]; and if he does not respond to it, the responsibility for this discreditable and regretful scene rests upon him. [OPPOSITION cheers and MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The point which the hon. Member has raised as to the adjournment of the House has occurred to me, but I am anxious not to put that rule in force. The House has met to-night for a particular purpose, which has not yet been arrived at. But, if I may say so, it is an unusual thing for the Opposition to dictate to the Government the order in which speeches are to be made; and surely, if hon. Members will reflect, it is a very dangerous weapon to employ. If used on one side to-night, it may be used by the other side another night. [AN HON. MEMBER: It has been used already.] As the Prime Minister has indicated [OPPOSITION cries of "He has not," "When?" and "Why does he not face it now?"] He said that he will [Renewed OPPOSITION cries of "No," "When did he say it?" and "He said nothing of the kind."] I certainly understood him to say that he would reply. [Cries of "When, when?"]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, who was received with Ministerial interruptions and cries of "Divide, divide," said: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I venture to make an appeal to the Prime Minister as the Leader of the House. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no!" and "Order, order!"] I think the Leader of the House must see that it will be impossible for this debate to proceed unless he, in the first place, makes a statement [Loud MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no" and OPPOSITION cries of "Order, order," and "Name, name"] on a subject——

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Appeal to your own side.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Yes, keep them in order. [Renewed MINISTERIAL cheers and NATIONALIST cries of "Suspend the Chancellor of the Exchequer" and "Send for the police."]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has risen with a view of appealing to the Prime Minister and to the House. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."]

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): That is not in order. [MINISTERIAL cheers and OPPOSITION cries of "Order."]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Other hon. Members have risen to make an appeal, and I think it is right that the Leader of the Opposition also should make an appeal. [OPPOSITION cheers.] He must feel, as deeply as I feel, that it is desirable that this scene should come to a conclusion. He may say something that may lead to that conclusion being arrived at. [MINISTERIAL laughter and cries of "No, no!"]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I wish to make an appeal to the Prime Minister on the ground that the question before the House is one upon which no one can make reply except himself. It is his speeches at various times and what he has said to-day at Question time which are in question, and no speech by the Colonial Secretary can touch that point. Therefore I would appeal to him, as the sole cause of any disorder [loud and prolonged cries of "Oh, oh!" "Name, name!" and "Divide" from the MINISTERIAL Benches]——

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am afraid that last sentence of the right hon. Gentleman has spoiled the effect of his appeal.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Let me finish the sentence, sir. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No" and "Withdraw."] What I was about to say is that as the sole cause of disorder is the fact of his not speaking, the disorder would cease if he now replied in debate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I rise to a point of order. Shall I be allowed to reply to the last speech of the right hon. Gentleman without losing my subsequent right to reply to the first speech?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The speech which fell from the right hon. Gentleman was in the nature of an appeal, and I am sure that the House would permit the Prime Minister to reserve what he has to say to a subsequent stage.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I am now saying is merely in the nature of a personal observation and does not touch the general substance of the debate, and on that I have to say that, in my opinion, it would be highly improper for me immediately to follow the right hon. Gentleman. The debate which he has chosen, by an unusual but no doubt a perfectly justifiable course, to initiate is one which deals no doubt largely with myself, and also deals with my colleagues [OPPOSITION cries of "No"]—I am quite willing to take it that it deals solely then with myself. The right hon. Gentleman is not, I understand, the only speaker in the House. I have never yet in the whole course of my experience known a debate on the adjournment concluded in two speeches; least of all a debate which deals with a subject which arouses such vehement passion as the present one. It appears to me it would be absurd to attempt to anticipate all the subsequent attacks that may be made upon me by replying to the first attack that has been made; and never in the whole course of my Parliamentary experience have I known the House refuse to listen to a member of the Government dealing with a subject which concerns the head of the Government, nor have I ever known an Opposition who thought it their function to suggest the order in which the Front Bench opposite to them ought to deliver their speeches. I am bound to say the precedent to-night, if followed, will absolutely ruin the House of Commons.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: You have done that already.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And as you, Sir, have most truly pointed out, and as must be obvious even to the right hon. Gentleman, if a Secretary of State is to be silenced by clamour simply and solely because Gentlemen opposite desire to hear somebody else [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh"]—well, I will put it differently —desire to anticipate by an hour or an hour and a half the pleasure of hearing somebody else ["Hear, hear!"], then I do not see how the dignity of this House is to be preserved. [Cries of "It has not got any" and "Move the closure."] I should, of course, take care—I should endeavour to rise at a time which would give any hon. Gentleman opposite the right of replying to any observations I might make; but never yet did I hear it suggested that it was consistent either with the rules of this House or with common justice that the criminal in the dock—for I understand that is the position I occupy—is obliged to make his defence before he has heard the whole accusation.

MR. LYTTELTON then attempted to continue his speech, but he was again received with disorderly cries from the OPPOSITION, such as "Divide," "Police," "Go to the Old Bailey," and laughter. He was proceeding to refer to the circumstances which governed the calling together of the Colonial Conference amid loud MINISTERIAL cries of "Pirie," when——

MR. CHURCHILL intervened and asked if the Prime Minister would speak next.

MR. J. F. HOPE, who rose amid OPPOSITION shouts of "Order" and pointed to the benches opposite: On the point of order, Sir, the hon. Member opposite—[Loud OPPOSITION cries of "Order" and MINISTERIAL cries of "Pirie."]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I thought it was understood, after the appeal of the Leader of the Opposition and the reply made by the Prime Minister, that the House was prepared to listen ["No"] to the Colonial Secretary, the Prime Minister having stated that he would reply. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."]

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): Send for the police.

MR. LYTTELTON again endeavoured to address the House, but owing to renewed interruptions the only words which were audible were "I intend to stand here"——

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.), amid cries of "Order," said: I beg, Sir, to move that the debate be now adjourned. [MINISTERIAL cheers and OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."]

MR. DEPUTY - SPEAKER and MR. DILLON rose together: Mr. Dillon shouted out, "On a point of order, Sir," and was greeted with loud MINISTERIAL cries of "Name," "Name." The Nationalists retaliated by crying out "Police," "Send for the police," and by cheering the hon. Member for Mayo, who remained standing, though unable to gain a hearing. Ultimately he resumed his seat.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Motion for the Adjournment of the debate would not be in order. The Motion before the House is that the House do now adjourn.

MR. LYTTELTON again rose, but the interruptions were renewed. "I am endeavouring to tell the House" were the only words which could be heard. The right hon. Gentleman stood at the Table of the House, awaiting a cessation of the interruptions, and was greeted with cries of "Time," "Time," by Mr. Dillon. Mr. Kilbride shouted across the floor of the House, "We cannot hear one word you are saying," while Mr. Reddy called out, "This is a proclaimed meeting."

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to move, Sir, that the Question be now put.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER ignored the interruption.

MR. LYTTELTON continued standing at the Table, but was unable to proceed with his speech.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to move that the right hon. Gentleman be no longer heard.

MR. LYTTELTON refused to give way to Mr. Joseph Walton, but made no progress with his speech. There were continuous cries of "Go on" and "Time," while Mr. Dillon shouted out several times, "Call in the Irish Constabulary," and another Nationalist Member demanded, that "The Horse Guards be sent for." The Colonial Secretary was heard to say, "I have been invited to continue," but calls for "Long," and renewed cries of "Time," rendered inaudible the remainder of the sentence. The disorder continued, and a few minutes before 10.30,

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER rose and said: It is perfectly obvious that this scene cannot go on. It has now lasted for nearly an hour. In these circumstances it comes, I take it, within the words of Rule 21—namely, "that in case of grave disorder" the power rests with the Speaker to adjourn the House without Question put. That power I now exercise, and I declare that the House stands adjourned.

Adjourned accordingly at half after Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 23rd May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) [H.L.]; Gas Orders Confirmation [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Petition for additional Provision in the Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to the Committee on the Bill to insert the additional Provision.

Read, and agreed to.

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill [H.L.]. Presented (pursuant to leave given on Tuesday last); read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners.

Stockport Corporation Bill. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on Thursday and Friday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill; Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Croydon Gas Bill; Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

South Suburban Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill. Read 3^a, and passed.

Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [H.L.]; Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 86); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill (No. 87). Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No 2) Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next.

East Cowes Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]; McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]; Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House; together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the cases. Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned.

———

WOOLWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed: the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name, viz, "That it be an instruction to the Committee to which the Bill may be referred that they shall strike out Clause 20." The Bill which has just been read a second time contains a number of provisions which, no doubt, may very properly be considered hereafter in the usual manner by a Committee of the House. There is, however, one clause which, if allowed to pass into law, would, as it seems to us, work grave injustice and form a dangerous precedent. Clause 20 proposes to abolish certain rights at present possessed by docks and railway companies in the Borough of Woolwich and almost everywhere in the Kingdom. The general district rate is one imposed by local authorities for services rendered in respect of lighting, sewers, streets, recreation grounds, etc., and in virtue of a series of Public Health Acts beginning in 1848 and culminating in the Public Health Act, 1875. In these Acts a special allowance of 75 per cent. has always been allocated to railway companies and owners of land covered by water outside the Metropolitan area. No doubt the reason for this special allowance was to alleviate in some degree the hardship to railway and dock companies of the established system of the rating of their property. These companies contribute on a very onerous basis towards local expenditure, receiving in return but little benefit. As an instance I may mention the fact that they provide their own police, repair their own roads, maintain their own system of sewage, light their own property, require no baths or free libraries, and last, but not least, they have no votes. That the exemption or allowance is justified therefore in theory, no one will, I think, be bold enough to dispute.

I do not, however, base my objection to the clause on this ground—strong as it is—but because the provisions of a Public Act ought not to be nullified by a Private Bill. For some reason, into which I need not now enter, this provision, though extending to all the rest of the country, was not applied to the Metropolis. Until 1899 Woolwich did not form part of the Metropolis. In 1899, however, His Majesty's Government introduced a Bill which brought Woolwich and some other districts within the Metropolitan area. In doing so, however, the Prime Minister pledged himself that all the then existing rights would be upheld. This promise, I need not say, he scrupulously fulfilled. The exemptions were carefully considered by the House of Commons in Committee of the Whole House on the 15th of May, 1899. There was a lengthy debate on an Amendment which had for its object the abolition of these very exemptions. The Prime Minister and the Solicitor-General both strongly resisted the Amendment, and the Prime Minister said that he could not imagine that privileges conferred by Act of Parliament should be taken away by a stroke of the pen and without compensation. The House of Commons, by 207 to 114, adopted the Prime Minister's view and agreed to Section 10, by which it is expressly provided that—

> "Any scheme under this Act . . . shall make provision for protecting the interests of owners and occupiers of any hereditament which is exempt from any rate or liable to be assessed thereto at a less amount than other hereditaments."

Scarcely, however, had the Act become law when the Borough of Woolwich endeavoured to evade the law and defeat the express undertaking of the Prime Minister. The question was fought out in the

Law Courts, and the Lord Chief Justice decided against the local authorities. He said—

> "We are all clearly of opinion that this contention cannot be maintained. . . . We think that it was clearly intended that though Woolwich and other outlying places were to come within the Metropolis generally, yet that exemption should continue."

That the Bill does propose to repeal provisions contained in a Public Act indeed is very fairly admitted by the promoters of the Bill. Clause 20 proposes to change the incidence of the rate—

> "Notwithstanding the regulations and conditions contained in the London Government Act."

Avowedly, therefore, the local authorities come before us and ask that the rights given by the Public Health Acts, which the Prime Minister promised should be maintained by the London Government Act of 1899, which were maintained by that Act, and which the Lord Chief Justice says were clearly intended to be, and as a matter of fact were, protected by that Act, should be swept away by a Private Bill.

My Lords, I think it would be easy to show that there were good grounds for the rights conferred on the companies. Moreover, large sums have been invested on the faith of these rights, and surely the shareholders are entitled to claim the support of His Majesty's Government and to call on them to carry out the pledge given by the Prime Minister. It cannot reasonably be contended that the railway or dock companies have gained any benefit whatever by their property in the Borough of Woolwich being included in the Metropolis, or that the borough have been saddled with any extra expense by the change. I believe I am right in saying that the general district rate at its present figure would bring in something like an additional £1,750 per annum if levied in full on the properties which at present enjoy the three-fourths exemption. Now, as your Lordships are all, no doubt, aware, there have been proposals for some time past to expropriate all the London dock undertakings for the purpose of forming a public trust, and only this year the London County Council promoted a Bill with that object. The effects of Clause 20 of this Bill would, I am told, be a clear loss of over £1,000 a year to the London and India Docks Company alone, and if the purchase of their undertakings is carried out while the Woolwich rates are at anything like their present figure, the purchasing body would be in a position to claim that their undertaking is worth £30,000 less than it is to-day. This would manifestly be most unjust.

The present system, which rests on a series of Public Acts and the pledge of the Prime Minister, is just and right in itself. But even if Parliament considered that there were sufficient grounds for depriving the companies of their rights, I submit to your Lordships that this should be done openly and by a Public Act. On these grounds it has seemed to those whom I have consulted that we are justified in asking your Lordships to withdraw the clause from the cognisance of the Committee. Rights, given by a Public Act and confirmed by Parliament over and over again, ought not to be over-ridden by a Private Bill. I submit to your Lordships that if we pass the Second Reading of this clause we shall be establishing a mischievous precedent, that we shall strike a blow at public confidence, and I confidently ask His Majesty's Government to support the instruction and thus give effect to the pledge of the Prime Minister, on the faith of which the Metropolis Management Act of 1899 was passed by Parliament. Moreover, if this clause is allowed to stand it will infallibly be urged hereafter as a precedent in such an event, for instance, as that of the great districts of East and West Ham being hereafter brought within the Metropolis, a contingency that has already been seriously suggested in Parliament by the Prime Minister. In thos boroughs there are very extensive dock and railway systems, and it would doubtless be attempted to extend the injustice against which we now protest, and to quote this Bill as a direct precedent in favour of doing so. My Lords, I have no direct personal interest in this matter, but it seems in the first place unfair and unjust to interfere with an arrangement deliberately made by Parliament; and, in the second, most improper that provisions deliberately adopted by a succession of Public Acts, and on the faith of which large sums have been invested, should be upset by a Private Bill.

Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Committee to which the Bill may be referred that they shall strike out Clause 20 of the Bill."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, perhaps I ought to say a word with regard to this Bill, which has come up from the House of Commons, where the matter has been considered by a Committee of that House. As soon as I saw the notice standing on the Paper in the name of the noble Lord, I asked that I might be supplied with a copy of the evidence which was laid before the Committee of the other House. I only received that evidence on Saturday, and I have, therefore, been unable to express to the noble Lord the views of my Department with regard to the Bill; but after having carefully looked into the matter, I find that, as the noble Lord has informed your Lordships, this particular question has been under the consideration of the High Court, who took the view which the noble Lord has already stated. And perhaps it would be as well if I quote to your Lordships the words of the Lord Chief Justice in delivering judgment. The Lord Chief Justice said—

> "Section 10, Sub-section 1, of the Act of 1899 provides expressly that a scheme shall make provision for protecting the interests of owners and occupiers of any hereditament which is exempt from any rate or liable to be assessed thereto at a less amount than other hereditaments. We think that it was clearly intended that though Woolwich and other outlying places were to come within the Metropolis generally, yet that exemption should continue."

The object of the Bill is to over-ride the decision of the High Court, because, of course, nothing short of an Act of Parliament could do so, and it is claimed that the Act as it appears upon the Statute-book does not in truth convey the intention of Parliament. I did not, under those circumstances, feel it my duty to take the usual course of moving the Second Reading of this Bill, and it has been moved by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Carrington). The Act of 1899 is a general Act affecting the whole of the Metropolis, and I think I am right in saying that when it was passing through Parliament the intention of the Government was expressed that all existing saving rights ought to be and should be protected, and I am therefore not able to concur in the view that the intention of Parliament has not been properly expressed in the Act.

It is not in any way desirable that it should become the practice of this House to move instructions to Committees. As a general rule, it is much better that all Private Bills should go to Committees to be thrashed out, but when a Bill is introduced to say, not what is the law, or how the law ought to be altered, but what was the intention of Parliament in making a law, then I venture to think that your Lordships as a body are entitled to express your opinion. I cannot contend that the moving of instructions to Committees is without precedent. There have been two precedents, one a good many years ago and one in the year 1902, which dealt with a Bill promoted by the London County Council to bring tramways over Westminster Bridge. On both of those occasions an instruction was moved in this House, and on the last occasion, although my predecessor in the office which I now occupy held the same view that I do, that it was inexpedient and undesirable that instructions should be moved to Committees, your Lordships decided otherwise, and the instruction was carried. In the circumstances of this case I do not propose to ask your Lordships to oppose the Motion of the noble Lord, but I confess I think it would have been much better if, in view of the expression of opinion that has been given to them, the promoters of the Bill had adopted the usual course and withdrawn the clause rather than compel your Lordships to go to a division upon it.

*EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I hope the House will allow me to say a few words on this clause as I had the honour of moving the Second Reading of the Bill. The noble Lord who moved the instruction to the Committee went so far as to say that the provisions of Clause 20 of this Bill constituted an unjust and unfair arrangement. I hope it is hardly necessary to say that if we had considered that there was anything unjust or unfair about the arrangement we should be the last persons in the world to have given any sanction to it; but I think the case is really not a very difficult or complicated one. The borough of Woolwich as it now exists, consists of the parish of Woolwich, the parish of Plumstead, and the parish of Eltham, all welded into one large borough. It is, I believe, the second largest borough in London. The parish of Woolwich was the only parish in the Metropolis which retained its local board till it was dealt with by the London Government Act of 1899, and when the Government passed that Act they intended, I believe, that Woolwich should be placed under the general law applying to Metropolitan boroughs. The Chairman of the Committee, who had paid great attention to the arguments urged by counsel on both sides, said—

> "We had to consider what was the probable intention of Parliament in framing these clauses. The intention of the Government was to place Woolwich under the general law applying to metropolitan boroughs."

They never intended that the London and East India Docks Company, the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company, and the Great Eastern Railway Company should be exempted from paying three-fourths of the rates of the parish of Woolwich. The intention was that they should pay the whole of the rates payable, as they do in the parishes of Eltham and Plumstead.

I do not think that the promoters of this Bill have any reason to complain at all of the attitude taken by the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees in your Lordships' House. He was quite frank on the subject, and said he would not oppose the Second Reading of the Bill. It should be remembered that this Bill has been approved by the Police and Sanitary Committee of the House of Commons and by the House of Commons itself, and that the Local Government Board and the Treasury have carefully considered Clause 20, which is as follows—

> "From and after the thirtieth day of September next, after the passing of this Act, all kinds of property within the parish of Woolwich, for the time being by law assessable to the general rate to which Sub-section (1) (B) of Section 211 of the Public Health Act, 1875, applies, shall be assessed on the full net annual value of such property notwithstanding the exceptions regulations, and conditions contained in that section and the provisions of the London Government Act, 1899, or any scheme or order made thereunder. Provided always that nothing in this section shall prejudice or affect any exemption from any rate or any right or liability to be assessed to any rate at a less amount than other hereditaments under or by virtue of the Metropolis Management Act, 1855, or any other enactment applying to London,"

and are satisfied that the change proposed to be effected is necessary and desirable. In these circumstances I do most respectfully submit that we have a very strong case. We have been told that this is an attempt to alter a Public Act by a Private Bill. No doubt that would be a very improper thing to do, but I submit that this public law, as it is called, never did apply to London at all. Before the passing of the Act of 1899, Woolwich was not a part of London for local government purposes. It became an integral part of the Metropolis when that great Act was passed, and all country Acts relating to Woolwich were supposed to have been repealed and the London Acts applied. The present state of affairs, which Clause 20 proposes to remedy, arose really through a mistake in the drafting, and advantage—I will not say unfair advantage—has been taken of the mistake that was made.

I am empowered to say that the borough of Woolwich does not object in any way to proper opposition to this Bill; they do not object to opposition from any of the companies. They wish for fair play, and are quite ready to accept the result. But they do object to this side wind being brought in to prevent an inquiry which I respectfully submit ought to be made before the proper tribunal, namely, a Committee of your Lordships' House. I have nothing more to say. I leave the case of the borough of Woolwich with the greatest confidence in the hands of your Lordships. I would only repeat, in conclusion, that both the Local Government Board and the Treasury have carefully considered the clause and are satisfied that the change proposed is necessary and desirable. Surely, in those circumstances, it is a little hard that the clause should be disposed of by an instruction to the Committee, thus depriving the Committee of the opportunity of giving the matter the consideration it deserves. The companies concerned, whose interest Lord Avebury seeks to protect, would still have every opportunity of opposing the Bill before the Committee, who may safely be left to safeguard any rights they may have. I hope your Lordships will not accept the instruction moved by Lord Avebury, but will allow the Bill to go to a Committee and proceed in the ordinary course.

Lord JAMES of HEREFORD: My Lords, I should like to say a word or two on the second point raised by the noble Earl who has just sat down. I will not touch on the merits of the Bill. What I object to, on principle, is that by the provisions of this Bill—a Private Bill—it is sought to repeal a Public Act. I can assure your Lordships that by Section 10 of the Act of 1899 any scheme under that Act must make provision for protecting the interests of owners and occupiers of any hereditaments exempt from any rate or liable to be assessed thereto at a less amount than other hereditaments. That provision, so far as it affects Woolwich, is sought to be repealed by this Private Bill. I hope this House will not agree to that. Some years ago in the House of Commons a Private Bill sought to repeal a Public Act of Parliament. I ventured then to call the attention of the House of Commons to the matter, and, with the full sanction of the Speaker, the House condemned the principle, and that Bill, so far as it proposed to repeal a Public Act, was not proceeded with.

I would remind your Lordships that the mode of procedure in passing Public and Private Acts is entirely different. In the case of Public Acts public opinion is brought to bear on their procedure through both Houses of Parliament, and they are discussed on their merits by those who know what public opinion is; but in the case of Private Bills no such procedure takes place except in a very modified form, and if this principle is to prevail you may have a Public Act, the principle of which has been discussed in both Houses of Parliament, repealed by a Private Bill, at the consideration of which by the Committee the public were totally unrepresented. The promoters of a Private Bill and the opponents might, for instance, come to terms as to a clause, and that clause might repeal a Public Act. The principle is altogether a bad one, and I hope your Lordships will not sanction it. If the contention of the noble Earl who moved the Second Reading of the Bill is right, let them remedy the matter by a Public Act.

There is another objection—a practical objection—in referring to which I am certain I shall receive the support of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack. The Judges who have to administer the law have records of every Public Act, but no library, except a few local libraries, possesses copies of Private Acts. Judges have no records of Private Acts, and yet they are supposed intuitively to know that a clause of some Private Act has repealed another clause of a Public Act. This mode of legislating places those who have to administer the law in a false position, and I hope, for the reasons which have been stated, the Motion moved by Lord Avebury will be carried.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I should like to offer a few remarks with regard to what has just fallen from the noble and learned Lord opposite. I think he has put the case in rather too strong a light. He says that Clause 20 of this Bill proposes to repeal a Public Act. I think that is far too strong an expression to use. I quite admit that it proposes to modify conditions which hold good under a Public Act, but only in order to bring it in accordance with the London Government Act, 1899, which has been passed for the whole of London. These conditions which it is now proposed to apply to the Borough of Woolwich are conditions which were applied by a Public Act to the whole of the rest of London. You have at this particular moment the Borough of Woolwich alone in which these particular corporations are exempt from the payment of a certain share of the rates.

The noble Lord who moved the instruction to the Committee argued this question rather on the justice of the case. He said it was hard on the dock and railway companies that they should be subject to these rates because they did not use the baths and washhouses or the public library, and derived no benefit from the objects of the rate; but I do not think that is a good argument. It does seem to me that whoever holds property in a particular district is bound on that property to pay for the benefit of the whole district and for the services which apply to the whole district. Therefore, I say it is a fair thing and common justice that these great corporations should be brought in to contribute fairly to the general rate of the Borough of Woolwich. I had thought it was accepted by all parties that one of the great desideratums was that in London the burden of the rates should be equalised. In every other part of London, as I have already informed your Lordships, the rates fall on corporations of the kind which my noble friend now endeavours in the case of Woolwich to exempt, and I do not think it is fair that they should be so exempted in the case of Woolwich.

As the noble Earl who moved the Second Reading has pointed out, the Bill has passed through the House of Commons, has been examined by a Committee of that House, and has received the support of the Treasury and the Local Government Board there. I should like to know what the view of the representative of the Local Government Board in your Lordships' House is with regard to this Bill. We are now asked by Lord Avebury to pass an instruction to the Committee to which the Bill may be referred to strike out Clause 20. All we are asking is that this particular clause should be allowed to go to a Committee of your Lordships' House to be discussed, in order that the whole merits of the case may be brought before the Committee and thoroughly threshed out. I had always thought that there was nothing this House was more opposed to than limiting the discretion of its own Committees. The Committees of this House have deservedly obtained a high reputation for the way in which they deal with Private Bills, and I urge your Lordships not to depart from the ordinary practice in this case, but allow the Bill, without this instruction, to go before the Committee and be discussed and decided on its merits.

Lord MONKSWELL: My Lords, I only rise to point out the view of Sir Erskine May in regard to the repeal of Public Acts by Private Bills. Sir Erskine May says that it had been questioned whether a Public Act might be amended by a Private Bill, but that—

> "No rule has been established which precludes the promoters of a Private Bill from seeking to amend a Public Act,"

though such a proposal required proper supervision. He gives a good many precedents, and states that in 1887 the Dover Harbour Corporation Bill was passed through Parliament repealing the Dover Harbour Public Act of 1861.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of Halsbury): My Lords, I only wish to say that I entirely associate myself with the remarks made by my noble and learned friend Lord James. It may be, where some great case has been made out and where there is an overwhelming necessity for it, that a Private Bill may, as Sir Erskine May says, be allowed to repeal a Public Act; but it is idle to say that there is any such overwhelming necessity in this case. The Borough of Woolwich wishes to obtain more rates, but that is not an overwhelming necessity such as would justify the repeal of a provision in a Public Act. I trust, therefore, that your Lordships will not sanction the clause in question going to the Committee.

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, I rather regret being obliged to say anything on this matter, but I feel some difficulty in agreeing to the course urged by my noble friends behind me. I am not going into the merits of the matter as to whether the clause is a just one or not, and I will not even go into the question which Lord Tweedmouth has so clearly put with regard to the general Act, and the bringing of Woolwich into line with the other boroughs in this matter; but I do confess I feel strongly that the view put forward by my noble and learned friend Lord James is the correct one, that a Private Bill should not be allowed to repeal a clause in a Public Act. The Act in question is a very important general Act, and I feel very great difficulty in the matter. This is a case of a Private Bill seeking to set aside a clause in a Public Act, and, without going into the merits of the case at all, I should feel great difficulty, if it came to a division, in following my noble friends behind me and voting against the instruction proposed by the noble Lord.

There is another matter which I cannot help referring to as a layman who does not find it always easy to interpret Acts of Parliament. I allude to the fact that in this clause there is a greater sin of reference than almost any that has been committed. I consulted a very distinguished lawyer on the question, and he said he was ready to look into it, but the clause was so complicated that even he could not in a few hours give a clear view upon it. That, I think, is a good example of what the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack and my noble and learned friend opposite referred to last night—the evil of legislating by reference. I regret to have had to make this statement, but I feel that there is considerable force in what has been said against overriding a Public Act by a Private Bill. If it is unjust to exempt Woolwich in this matter, that injustice should be remedied by a Public Act, and not by a clause in a Private Bill.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF SALE) BILL [H.L.].

Petitions in favour of; of inhabitants of Gloucester; Chillenden; Liverpool (2); Stockton-on-Tees; Derby; Glasgow; Reading; Leytonstone; Birmingham (2); Atherton; Croydon; Dorset and Southern Counties Temperance Association; Welsh Good Templars, East Anglia Lodge; Probus Society; Bible Christian (Methodist) Church; Summerfield Latter Day Saints; London Good Templars; Kent Temperance Federation; Durham Good Templars (2); Midland Temperance League; Scottish Temperance League; Scotch Good Templars. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3379. United States (Porto Rico); No. 3380. Western Pacific (Samoa).

Earl Spencer.

COMMERCIAL No. 2 (1905) (SUEZ CANAL).

Returns of shipping and tonnage, 1902, 1903, and 1904 (in continuation of "Commercial, No. 4 (1904)").

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

Correspondence relating to merchant shipping legislation in Australia and New Zealand.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade to the 31st December, 1904, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners to the same date. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

LORD MONKSWELL moved the insertion of a new clause after Clause 3, the object of which was, he said, to bring the Bill in conformity with other Bills of the same character which had been passed from time to time. The clause which he proposed was the ordinary one to prevent compensation being claimed in respect of improvements made after a Bill for compulsory purchase had been introduced. A precisely similar proviso was inserted in the London County Council General Purposes Bill of last year, and he was told that the clause was the ordinary one in those cases.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 3 to insert as a new clause, the words 'In settling any question of disputed purchase-money or compensation payable under this Act by the Council, the Court or persons settling the same shall not award any sum of money for or in respect of any improvement, alteration, or building made for or in respect of any interest in the lands created after the 18th day of October, 1904, if in the opinion of such Court or person the improvement, alteration, or building, or the creation of the interest in respect of which the claim is made, was not reasonably necessary, and was made or created with a view of obtaining or increasing compensation under this Act.' "—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, the noble Lord has stated with clearness the object of his Amendment. The Board of Education were not prepared to introduce a clause of this kind themselves, inasmuch as it did not come within their sphere, but as it has been proposed by the London County Council we do not offer any opposition to the Amendment. I understand that the clause is intended to protect the ratepayers, which is a very important matter at the present day, and to prevent any land which is taken compulsorily being built upon in order that a heavy compensation may be obtained when the Act comes into force. On behalf of His Majesty's Government, therefore, I accept the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Remaining clause agreed to. Standing Committee negatived: the Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (FACILITIES) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, the measure which I venture to submit for your Lordships' consideration this evening is, in my humble judgment, as simple as it is necessary and as necessary as it is simple. Its object is to enable the people of a district, when there is no other suitable provision in the neighbourhood, to hold public meetings in the rooms of public elementary schools in order that they may be able to hear the views of their candidates for Parliament or for the local bodies of the district in which they live. I venture to hope that I shall be able to show your Lordships in the first place that the measure is necessary; secondly, that its principle has had the direct sanction of both of the great Parties in the State; and thirdly, that it can be carried into effect without damage to the educational value of the schools or financial loss to the ratepayers or the school managers.

In order to show your Lordships that the measure is necessary at the present moment I shall have to trouble you with a short history as to how the necessity came about. The necessity for this measure arose in consequence of the Franchise Act of 1884, when, for the first time, agricultural labourers became the majority of the rural electors in county constituencies. Previous to that time the majority of the electors in those constituencies were farmers, or other well-to-do people, and their candidates or Members were accustomed to take advantage of the farmers' ordinary or some similar occasion in order to address them; but when the agricultural labourers became electors it was necessary for candidates to go into the various villages in order to come face to face with those who were to have the power of returning them to Parliament; and when I mention to your Lordships that in a large agricultural constituency which I had the honour of representing for many years, though it comprised eighty villages, there were only five places which it was possible to hire in which to address meetings, I think it will be seen that in that constituency at any rate the rooms of the elementary schools were the only places available for meetings.

A difficulty arose in 1885, because it was found in some of the villages that while the managers granted the use of the school to one of the candidates they objected to letting it to the other political candidate, or else put such conditions upon its use by him as to make it practically prohibitory. In the autumn of 1885 the question of disestablishment, which had not previously been very much before the electors, suddenly came to the front, and in a constituency which I myself know well the Conservative candidate went down to a certain village, obtained the use of the school, and made an attack on his opponent with regard to his views on disestablishment, although that opponent had never put disestablishment in the forefront on his programme.

Yet when the Liberal candidate asked for the use of the schoolroom, the vicar granted his request on condition that in the course of his speech he did not mention the word disestablishment, and so the unfortunate man had to go down to that village to answer an opponent who had attacked him a week before, and the main point in the attack was to be barred.

I want to say at once that I bring no accusation whatever against Conservative candidates. On the contrary, I am quite certain that they are just as anxious as we should be that their opponents should have full opportunity of putting their views before the electors. Nor do I bring any sweeping charges against school managers generally. I believe the class to which I refer are in an absolute minority, but at the same time in the small out-of-the-way places which this measure would practically affect, political hostility is often of a bitter nature, and it is in those places that it is necessary that agricultural labourers, who, after all, are not the best educated of the electors generally, should have an opportunity of hearing both sides of those great political questions upon which Parliament has given them the right and the duty of voting. And here I would mention a fact, which I would venture with all humility to commend to the right rev. bench. It is this, that the chairman of the managers is in many cases, if not in most cases, the vicar or the rector of the parish, and as I do not believe for a single moment that the majority of the clergy take such a view as I have pointed out of refusing their schools to particular political candidates, I think it is very hard that on account of a few political zealots there should be an injustice done to the clergy at large. It is on that account that I would ask, with all submission, for the support of the right rev. Prelates to my Bill.

There have been several Resolutions and Bills brought in on this subject. There were Resolutions in the House of Commons in 1887, in 1889, and in 1892. In 1887 and 1889 interesting discussions took place on the subject, but no vote was taken. But in 1892, on the eve of a general election, I was fortunate enough to persuade the House of Commons to unanimously pass a Resolution of which this Bill is the embodiment. More than that, with the assent of the present Prime Minister a Bill was brought into the House of Commons by the Government which was practically on all fours with this Bill. But, as your Lordships know, a general election shortly afterwards took place and the Conservative Government had not the opportunity of placing the Bill on the Statute-book, as no doubt they very ardently desired. It may be said that the succeeding Gladstonian Government ought to have brought in a Bill of their own on this subject. I do not know that it is necessary to remind your Lordships that during the somewhat strenuous Government of 1892–5 the House of Commons was occupied with a good many very large and far-reaching measures, and owing to the gallantry and eloquence of the Opposition of the day those measures took considerable time to debate. That may form an excuse for their not having dealt with the matter in a special Bill; but, as a matter of fact, the principle was embodied in the Local Government Act, 1894, which is generally known as the Parish Councils Act. Therefore I claim that the Government of 1892–5, busy as they undoubtedly were, yet embraced the only opportunity at their disposal of placing this principle on the Statute-book.

It may be said that in consequence of the Bill which was brought in by the Conservative Government and the unanimous Resolution of the House of Commons of 1892 the necessity for this measure, after all these years, has practically passed away. It is, of course, impossible for me or any private individual to obtain accurate information with regard to what has taken place throughout the whole of Great Britain, but I have been able to obtain some information with regard to the home counties, and though I do not pretend for a single moment that the information I have received is entirely complete, yet it goes to show that in the limited area of the home counties during 1904–5, at the by-elections that have taken place and at other elections, there have been eighty-four refusals of schools when they have been applied for, and that, I venture to think, is a very large number. I would also mention that there are cases among those I am referring to in which the schools have been refused to both political candidates. Then there have been cases where the charges for the hire of the schools were so high as to be practically prohibitive, and the managers of the schools have been able to avoid the obloquy of direct refusal of putting a prohibitory charge on the schools.

Then there are cases, not at all uncommon, in which the managers do not like the political opinions of the persons who apply for the use of the schools. I do not wish for a single moment to gibbet any particular place or any particular person, and if I venture to give some instances of replies that were received in answer to applications for schools I do not intend to mention names, but the authority, of course, is at the disposal of the noble Marquess or anyone else who desires to see it privately. One of the refusals was to this effect. A rev. gentleman wrote that the Conservatives had had a meeting at the "Red Lion," and he added—

"I presume that is available for you, too."

I venture to think that advocates of temperance on both sides of the House will agree that a public-house or an inn where wine, spirits, and beer are sold is not a very desirable place for a political meeting. The heady wine of politics is sufficiently exciting in itself, but if it is leavened by the beer of the "Magpie and Stump" it may have disastrous effects. The vicar of another place wrote to this effect—

"Not being myself a Liberal, but, on the contrary, a staunch Conservative, I cannot accede to the request contained in your letter."

Well, my Lords, that is very much to the point. I should have preferred that his answer had been of a more judicial character. Then there is a case which concerns a member of His Majesty's Government, and the story I am going to tell is immensely to his credit. A meeting was held by this gentleman, who was the Member for the constituency, and shortly afterwards his Liberal opponent applied for the use of the same school, but it was refused to him, and the gentleman to whom I refer intervened on behalf of his Liberal opponent, obtained the use of the school for him, and the meeting was held. But what a condemnation of the system that very fact is! The amusing part, however, is the result, for the clergyman said there should be no political meetings held in the school at all for the future. I think I have said enough to show that there is, even at the present moment, a necessity for this measure.

The principle of this Bill has the direct sanction of both political Parties. I have referred to the unanimous reception by the House of Commons of the Resolution moved in 1892, to the Bill which was brought in by the Conservative Government of that day at the instance of the Prime Minister embodying that Resolution, and, finally, to the Local Government Act of 1894, which received the assent of your Lordships' House and the House of Commons, endorsing the principle. The Bill of 1892, which, as I have said, was brought in by a Conservative Government, was practically on all fours with this measure. It provided that schoolrooms might be used for meetings in respect to elections to Parliament and the local bodies free of charge. I would emphasise the words "free of charge," because a noble Lord who criticised this measure pointed out that there ought to be some charge for the use of the schoolrooms. My answer is that when I originally drafted the Bill I had considered putting in a limited charge, but when I read the Conservative Bill of 1892, which, as I have said, was sanctioned by the present Prime Minister, and found that it provided that the use of the room should be granted without any charge, I felt that it was impossible for me to do other than follow that example.

As recently as 1902, when a debate took place on this subject during the discussion of the Education Bill, a Member of the other House moved a clause by which the schoolrooms would be at the disposal of Parliamentary candidates, and the Prime Minister said:—

"He was not saying that a provision of the kind, made universal—"

in that proposal it was restricted to voluntary schools—

"Could not be so safeguarded as to make it a reasonable and proper addition to the Statute-book, but he ventured to suggest that it should be introduced as a separate Bill and at a time when the House would have an opportunity of discussing it."

I have introduced it as a separate Bill this evening, and I venture to hope that your Lordships will find time to discuss it if it be necessary so to do. When Mr. Balfour accepted the Resolution of 1892 he said—

> "We are all agreed on both sides of the House that it is in the highest degree desirable that these schools, in districts where no other public place of assembly is obtainable, should be open to every side of politics."

I have every hope, therefore, that His Majesty's Government will accept this Bill. It can be adopted without interference with the use of the schools for educational purposes, and without loss to the ratepayers or the managers of the schools. It is laid down that any expense incurred shall be borne by the person in whose behalf the school is taken, and he will also pay for any damage that may be done. Moreover, except during elections, the use of the schools in these villages is to be limited to twice a year. Therefore, I claim that the Bill contains adequate safeguards. I do not know what the attitude of the Government will be, but I am sanguine that they will accept the Bill. If they do not I shall be curious to know on what ground the noble Marquess will base his refusal. If he opposes it on principle he will be opposing a principle which has been affirmed by his own Prime Minister and by his own Party in both Houses of Parliament. I venture, on my part, without hesitation to commend the measure to the common sense and justice of your Lordships' House and of the country.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, my noble friend who has just sat down, in the course of his exceedingly interesting, pointed, and lucid speech, appealed specially to the Episcopal Bench in the hope of obtaining their support for the Bill which he asks your Lordships to read a second time to-night. I am not empowered to speak as the representative of the Bishops generally on this subject, for we have not had an opportunity of jointly considering the measure; but, speaking for myself, and simply for myself, I wish to say that I believe the principle of the Bill to be sound, and one which your Lordships ought to accept. The noble Lord, in speaking of rural schools, presumably had in his mind the schools which are now described as "non-provided," and formerly as "voluntary," but he did not touch at all on the question of the ownership of the buildings in which the school work is carried on. It was, perhaps, not necessary for his argument that he should do so; but I would remind your Lordships that, while the buildings are largely used for public purposes — and those purposes are largely dependent upon public funds —the buildings still remain private property, and that fact has to be borne in mind when considering the difficulties with which this subject is surrounded. But, in whomsoever the actual ownership of the schools is vested, I maintain that they ought, in fairness, to be available for such purposes as this Bill describes, under careful restrictions against possible misuse and with definite limitations: the condition being carefully observed that they ought not to be so used except in places where no other suitable building is available. Holding that principle to be sound, I am prepared to vote with the noble Lord in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill.

But I desire to point out that the Bill will require a great deal of consideration in regard to its details before it can, without harm, become an Act of Parliament. It gives so great an extension of the right which now exists on the part of the public to the use of school buildings for other than educational purposes, that difficulties of no inconsiderable kind might, to the detriment of education, arise in some villages. I believe that those difficulties ought to be faced and can be overcome. The noble Lord stated that except during elections the use of the schools in these villages was to be limited to twice a year, but the Bill provides that after reasonable notice given by any Member of Parliament, county councillor, or member of any public body elected by the ratepayers of the area in which such district is situated, or any Parliamentary candidate, or candidate for the county council or other elective body for such area or district, the schoolhouse may be used in pursuance of the candidature of such person on two occasions during the year, which is a very different matter. There might be a very large number of individuals in the course of the twelve months who might wish to take advantage of this Bill.

I am all in favour of facilitating the ventilation of public questions on all sides, both in town and country. I believe that by carrying out that principle alone can we expect to advance the popular intelligence on public questions; and, holding that opinion most strongly, I am prepared to go as far as possible to meet the necessities of the case. The noble Lord who moved the Second Reading of the Bill spoke of the measure as being as simple as it was necessary. Necessary it may be, but simple in working, I venture to think, it certainly is not as at present drafted; and I believe a great many of the provisions will require much careful consideration before they can be satisfactorily placed on the Statute-book. I do not think that the safeguards which the Bill provides against the harassing use of the buildings are sufficient. The noble Lord quoted letters which had been received from the chairmen of boards of managers, before, I think, the passing of the recent Education Act.

Lord BURGHCLERE: No; during the years 1904 and 1905.

*The LORD ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY: The letters the noble Lord quoted were from the chairmen of managers respecting the use of buildings, and the writers of those letters were clergy in charge of parishes. Now it is doubtless true that there are a good many men who in matters of this kind are not very far-seeing, not very widely sympathetic, and possibly not very wise; but this is not confined to one class of men or to one side of politics. I could mention case after case of obstructive action taken at this moment by authorities with respect to schools which provide that kind of religious education which Parliament in its wisdom allows to be given; and I venture to think that a candidate for a county council who, like one who came the other day under my own observation, was a large employer of labour and declined to employ anyone who came from a Church of England school, would not be at all careful to avoid difficulties in the demand which this Bill would enable him to make on those in charge of the school buildings. Again, in the Bill there is a very invidious distinction drawn between secular and religious instruction, for there is this proviso—

> "Provided that such public meeting shall not be held at such times or in such manner as to interfere with the hours set apart for secular instruction."

I maintain that religious instruction is an inherent part of instruction as a whole, and must be placed in no such secondary or insignificant position as would be implied by the proviso as it stands. Very emphatically shall I—if the Bill goes forward as I hope it will — vote against the retention of any such distinction. The noble Lord gave us no explanation of that very remarkable and somewhat prominent distinction, and I should be curious to know on what ground it is made part of the Bill.

I am merely pointing out difficulties of detail and not in the least opposing the principle of the Bill. But the difficulties are not imaginary. For example, there is a provision in the third clause that if any question arises under the Act as to what is reasonably suitable or convenient it may be determined by the Board of Education. I daresay the Board of Education is as good an authority to refer educational questions to as could be found, but I should feel a little sorry for the Board of Education in London if it had to decide such local problems as whether or not there was any building in a parish suitable for the purposes of a particular meeting. That is not necessarily an educational question at all. For example, suppose there is in the village a public hall which can be hired for, say, ten shillings. Does that charge render the building unsuitable or unavailable, or inconvenient, and necessitate falling back upon the school. Or again, is the existence of a chapel which has hitherto been used for political meetings an adequate provision of another building? Those are the kind of details that will require to be carefully considered before this Bill is finally passed into law; but as regards the large principle embodied in the Bill, I believe it to be laid on sound lines, and I see no reason why such facilities should not be made practicable everywhere, provided the necessary limitations, which cannot be beyond our wit to devise, are carefully thought out and worded.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, the noble Lord has introduced this Bill in words of a most practical character, and his speech showed that he has the interests of the measure thoroughly at heart. The House also heard from the most rev. Primate a speech of a broad-minded character and one which will be of practical use in considering the important details in the future stages of the Bill. Lord Burghclere has been a consistent supporter of the cause of affording facilities for the holding of public meetings in schools. I am not going to follow him back to the year 1884 as to the facilities afforded to agriculturists for listening to political speeches, but I quite agree with him that the extension of the franchise has entirely altered the system of addressing electors.

I noted with interest how Lord Burghclere alluded to the fact that in 1892 he, as a then Member of the House of Commons, was responsible for a Resolution which was passed through that House without opposition from the Government of the day. The noble Lord did not exaggerate in the slightest degree the manner in which that Resolution was received in the House of Commons, but when he went on to say that the Bill introduced afterwards by Sir William Hart Dyke was on all fours with the Resolution for which he was responsible I am afraid I must differ from him on one point. The Bill of Sir William Hart Dyke was based on the speech he made when he accepted but criticised the Resolution of Lord Burghclere. In that speech Sir William Hart Dyke pointed out that there must be certain safeguards, and in the Bill which he introduced all those safeguards were provided to which Sir William alluded in his speech on the Resolution. Moreover, the Bill of Sir William Hart Dyke did not interfere with schools which were under private ownership. It is there that the difference comes in between the Bill of 1892 and the Bill which Lord Burghclere is now asking your Lordships to pass. In the speech in which Sir William Hart Dyke criticised the Resolution of the noble Lord he laid great stress on the fact that those who were responsible for the school must have security for damage done to the premises. I think that last objection has been met sufficiently by the noble Lord in the Bill now before your Lordships, and therefore on that question I will say no more.

I recall to my mind that when the noble Lord introduced an Amendment into your Lordships' House on this subject during the passage of the Education Bill of 1902 I was privileged, under the direction of the noble Duke who was responsible for the measure, to reply to that Amendment. Lord Burghclere said with great truth that that Amendment was not altogether on all fours with the Amendment which was moved in the House of Commons. Mr. Trevelyan in the House of Commons proposed that the obligation to give these facilities should apply only to voluntary schools, but Lord Burghclere differed from that in his Amendment and his proposal embraced all schools. I remember pointing out at the time that even though the noble Lord felt so strongly that these facilities should be given, the Government could not accept that proposal as an Amendment to a Bill which was already overloaded, and following the example of the Prime Minister, I said that if Lord Burghclere felt so strongly on the matter he might introduce a Bill in your Lordships' House. Therefore I would be the last person to complain of the introduction of this Bill. But it does not follow because the Prime Minister in the House of Commons and myself in your Lordships' House suggested that a separate Bill was the proper way of dealing with this subject, that we agree with the whole of the provisions now before us.

The noble Lord in this Bill lays stress on the fact that where there is no other suitable building the school should be available for meetings of all sorts and kinds. He alluded to the Parish Councils Act which gave facilities for the use of these schools, but solely for parochial or district council matters. This Bill goes a great deal further. The noble Lord also laid stress on the fact that a certain number of those who were capable of granting facilities for meetings had objected to schools being used for political purposes. He referred to the home counties, but evidently the home counties are different from that part of the country in which I live. There we have always given the greatest facilities, and I have myself lent a hall for the purpose of political meetings at which I have been very much abused. Great consideration must be shown towards the owners of schools, who perhaps do not share the opinions of those desiring to hold meetings. Everyone has a right to his own views, and it might be objectionable to some that a school of their own should be used by a political opponent for the purpose of abusing them.

Undoubtedly the noble Lord has a stronger case now than before 1902, because the ratepayers now subscribe to the maintenance of the schools, which before enjoyed no assistance from the rates. On this ground the claim of the ratepayers, therefore, cannot be ignored. They have a right which they did not possess in years past to the use of the schools. But it must be remembered that many of the schools are the private property of individual owners, and although they now receive rate aid the requirements of the local authority are so heavy that the advantage they derive from receiving rate aid places them on no better f oting than in 1902. These are matters which should be very carefully considered before we decide on giving virtually free access to the schools by Act of Parliament. I endorse what has been said by the most rev. Primate as to the lack of any provision in the Bill to prevent interference with religious instruction, and I consider it a most important omission. The most rev. Primate has declared himself in favour of the principle of the Bill, and on behalf of His Majesty's Government I have to say that we offer no opposition to the Second Reading. At the same time I think your Lordships will realise that there are many of the details of the Bill which will require most careful consideration. I therefore suggest that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I did not catch the last words of the noble Marquess, but noble Lords beside me tell me that he proposes that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. I think it is a very unusual course for a short and simple Bill like this to be referred to such a Committee. I admit that there may be clauses in the Bill which require alteration, but it seems to me almost unparalled to refer so simple a Bill as this to a Select Committee. I therefore hope His Majesty's Government will not insist on that course. The noble Lord in charge of the Bill will be ready to consider any proposals made to check injustice and to meet the criticisms of the most rev. Primate. In the circumstances I can only suppose that the object of referring the Bill to a Select Committee is to endanger its passing by causing delay.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I greatly regret that the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition cannot accept the considerate proposition made by the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Education to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. The noble Marquess told your Lordships that His Majesty's Government were favourable to the principle of the Bill. The principle of the Bill is no doubt a simple matter enough, but when you come to consider the proposed application of that principle you at once find yourself face to face with a number of points of detail of very great difficulty. I am sure those of your Lordships who listened to the speech of the most rev. Primate must have felt that the matter was by no means so simple as the noble Earl supposes. The principle of the Bill, I take it, is this, that it is desirable that Parliamentary candidates and others should be given an opportunity of making use of these schoolrooms in connection with their candidature when no other suitable rooms or places are available, and the noble mover has made it clear that that privilege is not one to be exercised constantly but only on rare intervals. But when you come to the manner in which that simple principle is to be interpreted the matter ceases to be so easy, and I cannot help thinking that the feeling of your Lordships will be that the difficulties in points of detail require the kind of examination which they will be more likely to receive in a Select Committee than in a Committee of the Whole House.

Lord BURGHCLERE: My Lords, I must say I listened to the earlier parts of the speech of the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Education with the greatest gratitude, but the sting unfortunately came in the tail. For my part I cannot understand why His Majesty's Government require a Select Committee on this Bill, when in the year 1892 they produced a Bill of their own on this subject in eight or ten days without a Select Committee at all. It is open to the noble Marquess and His Majesty's Government in Committee to move stock and block, as Amendments to my Bill, the very precautions they themselves brought forward in 1892. The proposal to refer the Bill to a Select Committee can only be explained by a desire indirectly to defeat the Bill. I am grateful to His Majesty's Government for accepting the principle of the Bill, which, after all, is the only question before the House on Second Reading, but the proposed reference to a Select Committee is a dilatory process and absolutely unnecessary. I do not wish to take up an unreasonable attitude, but I do make an urgent appeal to the noble Marquess the Leader of the House, seeing that the Government have accepted the principle of the Bill, not to persist in the proposal to refer it to a Select Committee. I am perfectly willing to meet the most rev. Primate and His Majesty's Government in any Amendments they may bring forward in Committee of the Whole House, which is surely the proper place for questions of this sort to be dealt with. I hope the Government will reconsider their decision and allow the Bill to be read a second time and considered in the usual way by the Standing Committee, which I think is better than any Select Committee, and the Committee of the Whole House.

***The LORD ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY**: My Lords, it is only by the indulgence of the House that I can say another word, but I should be sorry to have it supposed that the suggestions I had made were of a character to render necessary the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee. It may be that I may have led His Majesty's Government to suppose that I, for one, as possibly representing many outside, thought the Bill could only be adequately amended by a Select Committee; whereas, so far as I know, there is nothing in the Bill which may not be dealt with satisfactorily in the Committee of the Whole House, and in the Standing Committee; and I therefore venture to hope that the proposal to commit the Bill to a Select Committee may be reconsidered.

Lord NEWTON: I must confess that I share in some measure the surprise expressed by noble Lords opposite at the proposal of the Government to refer this Bill to a Select Committee. The principle of the Bill is generally accepted; all that is required are certain Amendments in Committee which I cannot believe are of so complicated a nature as has been represented. Take one, for instance—the point as to religious instruction. The clause at present provides that the public meetings shall not be held at such times or in such manner as to interfere with the hours set apart for secular instruction. Surely the point raised by the most rev. Primate could be met by the simple omission of the word "secular." That is an instance of the kind of Amendment which would be required. I am afraid that the prospects of the noble Lord's Bill passing are not of the brightest in any event, but if it is referred to a Select Committee it will have but a small chance. I would add that there is considerable difficulty in finding Members of your Lordships' House to serve on these Committees, and that is an additional reason why the Bill should be considered in the Committee of the Whole House.

***The Marquess of LANSDOWNE**: My Lords, I can assure your Lordships that nothing is further from our thoughts than to defeat the Bill either by dilatory tactics or vexatious opposition. We proposed the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee because we believed there would be a number of comparatively minute points which would be better disposed of by such a Committee; but in view of the feeling which has been expressed by some of your Lordships, and particularly in view of the appeal made by the most rev. Primate, by whose arguments I was certainly influenced in favour of the Bill going to a Select Committee, I propose not to press the Motion.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Debate on the Motion for the Second Reading, resumed (according to order).

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, I have to thank the noble Lord in charge of the Bill, Lord Avebury, for the courtesy he has shown in allowing the Motion for the Second Reading to be further adjourned until to-day, and I regret any inconvenience that may have been caused him. The Bill, as the noble Lord informed your Lordships in moving the Second Reading, has passed through all its stages in the other House without opposition. Its object is to amend the law as to the hours of closing of licensed premises on Christmas Day in Ireland, and it merely makes compulsory what I am informed is practically the general custom in Ireland—namely, the closing of public-houses on Christmas Day. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government have no objection to the Second Reading.

LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I am much obliged to the noble Marquess and His Majesty's Government for accepting the Bill, and I should like to ask whether, as all the Amendments suggested by the Government were accepted in the other House, he will allow me to move that the Standing Committee be negatived.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I was under the impression, from the course taken on a previous occasion by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, and by His Majesty's Government, that the Bill would be resisted. As, however, the Government are in favour of the Second Reading it is no use attempting resistance, but I beg to give notice that I shall at a later stage move that Ulster be exempted from the Bill.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, I think my noble friend, before he submits any such proposition, should ascertain whether the proposed exemption would be approved of in Ulster. So far as I know, the Bill has been received with a great deal of commendation throughout Ireland.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: What, in Ulster?

*LORD ASHBOURNE: The Bill, as I have said, has received a great deal of commendation in Ireland, and the leading clergy in every part of the country are, I believe, in favour of it. The General Synod of the Church of Ireland, the most representative body of Church feeling in Ireland, attended by Bishops from every part of Ireland, including Ulster, and by the leading clergy and laity from every part of Ireland, including Ulster, passed a unanimous resolution in favour of the Bill.

LORD DE ROS: I can assure your Lordships, as an Ulster man, that the people in Ulster are in favour of the Bill and that much good is anticipated from it. I hope, therefore, that if the noble Earl at a later stage moves exemption in the case of Ulster the proposition will not be entertained.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

House adjourned at five minutes past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 23*rd May*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords]; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill; Liverpool Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill; London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill; London Government Scheme (London and Middlesex) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Dublin United Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That a message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House Copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with the Documents deposited in the cases, of Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bills if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 7).

Mr. BOND reported from the Committee on Group 7 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday, at Twelve of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee—

1. "That in the case of the Great Central Railway Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. "That, in the case of the Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company's Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Sir HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and of Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords], as desired by this

House, with a request that the same may be returned.

That they have agreed to—Epping Gas Bill, without Amendment.

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill, with an Amendment.

Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Weaver Navigation Trustees to improve their lift at Anderton, and to raise further moneys; and to confer further powers upon the Cheshire County Council with reference to such moneys; and for other purposes." [Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to Adolph Leven in respect of an invention for Improvements in appliances for protection against Projectiles." [Leven's Patent Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to regulate the capital of the Darien Gold Mining Company, Limited; and for other purposes." [Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords.]

Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords]; Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]; Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.

Petition from Douglas Water, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Hull, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 447 (Bermuda, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Merchant Shipping Legislation in Australia and New Zealand [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1904, and of the Proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 169.]

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 16th May; *Mr. Cochrane*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 170.]

SUEZ CANAL (COMMERCIAL, No. 2, 1905).

Copy presented, of Returns of Shipping and Tonnage passing through the Suez Canal 1902, 1903, and 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3379 and 3380 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Uganda Poll-Tax Ordinance.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the Poll-Tax Ordinance, 1905, published in the *Uganda Official Gazette* of April 1st, 1905, which enacts that a poll-tax of two rupees per annum shall be payable in the same manner as the hut tax by each adult male native, and that any person who has not the means to pay the two rupees in cash shall in lieu thereof work for the period of one month; and whether His Majesty's Government has sanctioned this system of forced labour.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) My attention has been called to the Ordinance in question, which has been sanctioned by His Majesty's Government. The payment of any taxes appears to me to involve compulsory labour except in the case of those who have savings or accumulated capital available to discharge them.

Importation of Intoxicating Liquor into the Lagos Hinterland.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the importation of intoxicating liquor into the Lagos *hinterland*, and its sale there, and particularly in the city of Ibadan, has largely increased of latter years; whether this is due to the facilities provided by the Government railway for the carriage and storage of spirits, among such facilities being a much lower freight on spirits between Lagos and Ibadan than the cost of carriage by road and the erection of special stores for spirits at various places on the line; and, if so, whether he is prepared to take any steps to remove these facilities, and to discourage the importation of liquor, and particularly of overproof spirit, into the Lagos *hinterland*.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) As regards the importation of liquor into the Lagos *hinterland* by road, systematic records have only recently been instituted on this subject; but, as regards the spirits carried by the railway, the general manager in his last published report says that the demand shows little or no upward tendency, and that the rail-borne traffic bears an infinitesimal ratio to the total imports. The importation of overproof spirit into Abeokuta and Ibadan is prohibited. The duty on spirits imported into Lagos has recently been increased to 3s. 6d. a gallon, and it may be added that the duty was 8d. a gallon in 1891. The total imports of spirits into Lagos has considerably decreased in the last two years. In the circumstances there does not appear to be any necessity to take any steps in the direction suggested by the hon. Member.

Advertisements in the Colonial Office Waiting-Room.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will explain why the walls of the waiting-room at the Colonial Office are crowded with placards, including an advertisement of special tours to Jamaica, by Messrs. Elder, Dempster, and Co.'s boats, a time-table of the firm's West African service, photographs of the steamships "Targerah" and "Nigeria," belonging to this firm, illustrations of their buoys, two drawings of the Lagos Office of the Bank of West Africa, a drawing of Messrs. Elder, Dempster, and Co.'s steamer "Porto Novo," and an advertisement almanac of the African Oil Mills, Limited; and will he say whether these advertisements were placed with his sanction in the waiting-room of the Colonial Office, in which there are no advertisements of other firms.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The waiting-room in question is that used by visitors having business to transact in connection with the West and East African Colonies and Protectorates, and it is for their convenience, as travellers to and from these countries, that such placards are exhibited in the waiting-rooms of the Colonial Office. The West African waiting-room is not exceptionally treated, nor is any preference shown to particular firms, and the placards referred to by the hon. Member are not the only ones in that room.

Compulsory Vaccination of Pupil Teachers in Scotland.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Miss Haines was appointed a pupil teacher by the Peterhead Burgh School Board in the month of July last, and commenced her duties in the following September, but has recently been informed that her appointment cannot be confirmed until it can be certified that she has been successfully vaccinated; and will he explain why this rule has been imposed.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) It is the fact that in accordance with a general rule to that effect the Department have refused to confirm Miss Haines' appointment on the ground that she has not been vaccinated. The rule was imposed in the interests of the health of the children.

Corner in Pig-Iron at Middlesborough.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the action of certain capitalists of Middlesborough has resulted in a corner in pig-iron, which is disorganising the iron and other dependent industries throughout the North of England; and, seeing that, under the same gambling systems, the late corners in cotton and other commodities were operated, whether His Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of promoting legislation, in conjunction with other Governments, to prevent these constant upheavals in trade.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) I am aware that the iron trade has recently been affected by a rise in the price of pig-iron, attributed to speculative purchases of Cleveland pig-iron warrants in anticipation for a demand by the United States. I understand, however, that this temporary rise of prices is now at an end. As regards the last part of the Question, I am unable to add anything to the Answers which have been given to similar Questions by the hon. Member.

Norton (Isle of Wight) Outfall Sewer.

MR. MARTIN (Worcestershire, Droitwich): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that on October 6th, 1903, the Board of Trade gave permission to the Isle of Wight Rural District Council to construct an outfall sewer upon the foreshore at Norton, near Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, in connection with the Freshwater and Totland sewerage scheme, upon condition that the length of pipe from high water mark to the point of discharge should be 1,300 feet and that the pipe was to be laid under the surface of the shore and sea-bed for the first 1,000 feet and partly under the surface of the sea-bed for the remaining 300 feet; and whether, seeing that the contractor has laid the pipe above the surface of the sea-bed, what steps the President of the Board of Trade proposes to take to compel the contractor to carry out the drainage according to the plan approved by his Board, in view of the danger to the sanitary condition of Freshwater and Totland, and the obstruction caused to in-shore navigation.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Board of Trade on the 11th instant called the attention of the rural district council to the facts as stated in the Question, and inquired what steps the council propose to take in order to bring the works into conformity with the plans sanctioned by the Board. The Board are now awaiting the reply of the council. They are, however, not aware that any danger to the sanitary condition of Freshwater and Totland could arise from the pipe as now laid.

Increased Annual Leave and Annual Increments for Assistant Clerks (Abstractor Class).

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of increasing the annual increment and annual leave to assistant clerks of the abstractor class in the various Departments.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Heads of Departments were notified this month of improvements in the annual leave and in the annual increments which the Treasury has decided to grant to the class of assistant clerks.

Medical and Dental Practitioners struck off Register for Misconduct.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state how many medical and dental practitioners have been struck off the register during the last ten years for infamous or disgraceful conduct; and in how many instances the names of practitioners have been restored to the register during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have asked the General Medical Council to furnish me with this information, and when it is received I shall be happy to communicate it to the hon. Member.

Materials used in the Manufacture of Beer—Board of Inland Revenue Cautions.

Dr. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the materials used in the manufacture of beer in respect of which a caution as to their use has been issued, and those materials whose employment has been forbidden.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) As regards the two years ending April 30th, 1905, the following is a list of the materials used in the manufacture of beer in respect of which a caution as to their use has been issued by the Board of Inland Revenue:—Heading Powders, etc.—Minoka juice, Dublin stout heading, optacreme, clarifoam, cortex quillaia pulvis. Preservatives, etc.—Alginol, universal preservative tablets, phylax, salicylic acid, kalia meta sulphite, antacid neutralisers, gypsum, magnesia sulphate. Hop Substitutes, etc.—Optanin, Bradley's hop supplement, Estcourt's hop supplement. In the following cases the use of the article was objected to by the Board of Inland Revenue:—Flavouring Essences: malt, yeast foods, glucose, invert sugar, etc., containing arsenic. Peptomides, containing arsenic and copper. Stoutine, Baines combined heading and beer preservative, optacreme, ecumin, moussine, clarifoam, heading powders and liquids, containing quillaia extract. Saccharin, sucramine, and other compounds containing saccharin.

Erection of New Buildings at Glasnevin—Irish Slates.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland are inviting tenders for the erection of buildings at Glasnevin, and that a supply of Westmoreland slates is specified; and, seeing that Irish slates of first-class quality can be supplied at a much lower cost, whether arrangements will be made to allow of competition between the Irish and English article.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The fact is as stated in the first inquiry, but the Commissioners inform me that their architect will be instructed to allow any contractor, who so desires, to submit an alternative tender for the supply of Irish slates. The Commissioners will further consider the matter when selecting a contractor for the works.

Compensation for Injuries to Volunteer Officers while on Duty.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether a Volunteer officer, injured in proceeding, in accordance with battalion orders, to attend a guard of honour, is entitled to compensation for injuries under the provisions of paragraph 617, Volunteer Regulations.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) As the Answer depends on the nature of the guard of honour, and the authority by which the guard was ordered, it is not practicable to give a reply without further particulars on these points.

Insanitary Condition of the Island of Lewis—Date of Second Reading of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the statements contained in the report of the medical officer of health for Ross and Cromarty concerning the insanitary condition of the Island of Lewis, and the inability of the authorities to cope with the evils complained of until the Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill becomes law, will he state whether arrangements will be made to take the Second Reading of the Bill before Whitsuntide.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The Government are anxious to obtain the Second Reading of this Bill at an early date, and I can only regret an opposition to it which delays its progress.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Unanswered Questions.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) called Mr. Deputy-Speaker's attention to the fact that a "starred" Question addressed to the Colonial Secretary, which was not reached on the previous day, had not, according to custom, been answered with the printed Papers. He had asked the Colonial Secretary why the walls of the waiting room at the Colonial Office were hung with advertisements of Messrs. Elder, Dempster, and Co., and he desired to know how he could obtain an Answer.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entitled to ask the Colonial Secretary why the Answer has not been circulated.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL asked the Colonial Secretary why the Answer to his Question had not been circulated. He attempted to read the Question in full but was stopped by Mr. Deputy-Speaker.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) said it was a pure oversight that the Question was not answered. Owing to other events of a rather disturbing character that occurred the previous day, the matter escaped his attention, but he had sent to the Colonial Office for the Answer and it would be circulated with the next morning's Votes.

Torpedo School at Sheerness.

Mr. JOHN HOWARD (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it has been definitely decided to form a torpedo school at Sheerness; and, if so, when the formation of the school is to take place.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): It has been decided to form a torpedo school at Sheerness, which it is hoped may be done very shortly.

School of Gunnery—Removal to Chatham.

Mr. JOHN HOWARD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty has definitely decided to remove the school of gunnery from Sheerness to Chatham; and, if so, when the removal is to take place.

Mr. PRETYMAN: This removal has been decided on, but no definite date can yet be stated, as this depends upon how soon the new accommodation at Chatham can be available.

Mr. JOHN HOWARD: When is it expected that the school buildings will be finished?

Mr. PRETYMAN: I cannot tell; the arrangements are not quite settled.

Employment in Government Departments for Ex Soldiers.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a statement of Lord Roberts on May 15th to the effect that only nine places had been found for retired soldiers during the past twelve months in Government Departments; and what he proposes to do in the matter.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): My hon. and gallant friend has already drawn my attention to the number of vacancies among messengers in public offices, other than the War Office, which have been filled by pensioners last year. He may rest assured that I have not lost sight of the matter and that I am taking steps towards ensuring increased civil employment in the direction suggested.

Cost of Military Prisons.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the total cost, including buildings, upkeep, staff, and administration, of military prisons at home and abroad, exclusive of India.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The total cost, as provided in Estimates 1905–6, may be taken at about £65,000.

Fortifications of London.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office how much has been expended out of the money provided by Military Works Bills on the fortification of London.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield): A sum of £85,200 has been expended on the mobilisation centres around London, to which the hon. Member doubtless alludes, out of the loans provided by the Military Works Acts.

India—The Recent Earthquake—Goorka Losses.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the special terms under which Goorkas are enlisted in the Indian Army, he can state what steps, if any, the Government of India propose to take in order to compensate them for the losses sustained in the recent earthquake.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): It is not correct to say that Goorkas are enlisted on special terms so far as any claim to compensation is concerned, but recommendations for special consideration to those who have suffered have been submitted by the Commander-in-Chief in India, and the decision of the Government of India will shortly be notified.

Mosquitos and Yellow Fever—Mexican Remedy.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he is aware that the efforts of the Mexican Government and the Superior Board of Health at Mexico to stamp out yellow fever and all malarial diseases by exterminating the mosquito by the adoption of certain scientific methods have met with considerable success; and whether, having regard to the fact that malarial fevers are constantly prevailing in parts of India, he will cause inquiries to be made in connection with the Mexico experiment with the object of giving it a trial in India.

Mr. BRODRICK: I have seen a pamphlet on the subject by the Superior Board of Health at Mexico, and propose to send a copy of it to the Government of India. Experiments of a somewhat similar kind have for some time past been in progress in India, and the experts conducting them are doubtless aware of what is being done in the same direction in other parts of the world.

Congo Commission of Inquiry.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he knows when the publication of the Report of the Congo Commission of Inquiry may be expected, and the reasons given by the Congo Government for the delay; and whether, having regard to the correspondence with His Majesty's Government which preceded the issue of the Commission, any steps can be taken by His Majesty's Government to hasten the publication of the Report and evidence, in order that its value may be judged.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): The three members of the Congo Inquiry Commission have, we understand, only just reassembled at Brussels after a brief holiday, and are now engaged in preparing their Report. His Majesty's Government will not fail to urge upon the Congo Government the importance of early publication.

Income-Tax Statistics.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state, for the financial years 1903, 1904, and 1905, the total amount of income-tax discharged by the Commissioners of Income-Tax on fines applied as productive capital under Rule 5, of No. 2 Schedule A, s. 60, 5 and 6 Victoria, c. 35.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): There is no separate record of amounts discharged under this head. It may, however, be said that the number of cases of the kind in any one year is very few.

Underground Cable to Glasgow.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the electric cables for the pipes which are now laid between Carlisle and Glasgow are likely to be drawn in, and the telegraphic communication completed with Glasgow, before the stormy period of the equinoctial gales; and whether it is in contemplation to extend the underground cables to Dundee and Aberdeen.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The orders for the Carlisle to Glasgow cable were given at the earliest possible moment in this financial year, and were placed with three different makers in order to expedite delivery, but they will not be completed by the equinox. It is not in contemplation to extend the underground line to Dundee and Aberdeen at present.

Freight on Paper to New Zealand.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the freight for paper by the New Zealand Shipping Company from Rotterdam to New Zealand *via* London is 29s. per ton, whilst the freight for the same goods by the same line from London is 40s. per ton; whether he can state if this shipping company receives any subvention for the carrying of mails; whether any explanation can be offered of the fact that it costs less to send goods from London to Rotterdam, back again to London, and thence to New Zealand, than from London to New Zealand direct; whether he is aware that the difference represents over ten per cent. on the cost price of the cheaper kinds of paper; and whether he has instituted or will institute an inquiry into the effect of such discrimination on British trade.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): (1) The Board of Trade are informed by the New Zealand Shipping Company that the rate of freight on paper from London to New Zealand ranges from 28s. 9d. to 55s, per ton according to quality, and that the rate from Rotterdam to New Zealand is as stated, viz., 29s. per ton. (2) The Board of Trade understand that the company receives no subvention for the carrying of mails, and the company regard this as placing them at a disadvantage as compared with German lines. (3) The Board of Trade are aware that freights from the United Kingdom to Australia direct are often higher than those from the United Kingdom *via* a Continental port. The reason is alleged to be that there is keener competition in the latter case. (4) I regret that the result of this competition is that the rates are lower from the Continent than from the United Kingdom, but I do not think that any useful purpose would be served by such an inquiry as is suggested by the hon. Member.

New Government Buildings in Parliament Street.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether there has been any cessation in the external work of the Government buildings at the south end of Parliament Street; and when approximately it is expected that the scaffolding will be removed.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. The scaffolding will probably be ready for removal in about a year's time.

Untenanted Houses in Galway City.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, in view of the fact that sections of town property in Galway City are covered with ruined houses that the landlords will neither sell nor let, that such properties, although situate in some of the best streets of Galway, are free from municipal taxation, and also constitute a disfigurement of the city, and in view of the need for sites upon which to build habitations for the working classes, he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation dealing with the subject.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I have no information as to the facts stated in the Question, but, in any event, it is not the intention of the Government to introduce legislation on the subject this session.

Case of Sergeant-Major Murphy, Connaught Rangers.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland is he aware that the boy, P. D. Williams, who is the principal witness in the charge against Sergeant-Major Murphy of the Connaught Rangers, has been arrested for desertion from his regiment which took place on 1st February last; and, if so, can he state who ordered the arrest of Williams, pending the hearing of the charge against Murphy, who is the sergeant-major of the regiment to which Williams belongs; is Murphy at present doing duty as sergeant-major; and, if not, when did he cease to act, and where is he at present.

MR. ATKINSON: The reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The arrest was made at the instance of the military authorities. I cannot say whether Sergeant-Major Murphy is at present doing duty, but he is with his regiment at Mullingar, whereas the witness Williams is retained at Dundalk.

Waterville Steam Laundry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that it is proposed to start a steam laundry at Waterville; and whether, in view of the employment that would be thereby given, the Congested Districts Board would be prepared to advance a loan towards the erection of the necessary buildings and machinery.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The Board have decided that they cannot make a loan for the purpose mentioned.

Kerry Technical Instruction Schemes.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of the resolution, passed by the County Kerry Technical Instruction Committee on the 4th inst., to the effect that it would be impossible to continue to work satisfactorily technical schemes in that county if arrangements are not made between the Department and the Congested Districts Board to give grants towards the county schemes in respect of technical schemes in congested districts; and whether he will take steps to secure to the congested districts of the county the advantages of the county technical instruction schemes.

MR. WALTER LONG: The resolution has been received. I informed the hon. Member on April 11th† that the Department's funds, under the county scheme, are applicable to congested districts and non-congested districts alike, but that the Congested Districts Board have no funds to contribute to the county scheme. I fear I can add nothing to that reply.

Domiciliary Visits by Police at Athenry.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police, who have recently entered the houses of families in the neighbourhood of Athenry, have done so without first obtaining the permission of the owners; whether the police were furnished with special warrants or orders to enter the houses of certain individuals, or whether the police patrol exercises a discretion to enter the house of any person they think fit to enter; what instructions are given to police as to the action they are to take in the event of any resistance being offered to their entrance, and are they instructed to immediately leave the house if ordered by the owner to do so; and were there any criminal charges against the persons whose houses have been entered by the police.

MR. WALTER LONG: The police have recently entered the houses of certain persons with their implied permission, as anybody else would enter. No express permission was asked for, and no objection was made to their entrance or presence; had any such objection been made, they would have at once yielded to the objection, unless they had come to execute a warrant or had legal justification for remaining. No special warrants were issued nor special orders given on the occasions referred to. A patrol is sometimes instructed to make inquiries at a particular house and to enter it for that purpose, and sometimes it is left to their own discretion to enter for such purpose. The doors are often found open; they are never forced; and any objection, as I have said, to the police entering or remaining in the house would be at once yielded to. No criminal charges were made against any of the persons whose houses were entered.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 1275.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Did the police visit any of the landlords' houses on the occasion?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say, Sir; but the police in England have often visited my house.

MR. DILLON: Is it proposed to continue to allow the police who patrol this district to exercise this discretion of entering the houses of any peasant during the night?

MR. WALTER LONG: If I had reason to think that the police entered the houses of the people against their wishes I would give instructions that the practice should be discontinued; but no such information has reached me.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Did the police enter the right hon. Gentleman's house after 10.30 at night without his permission?

MR. WALTER LONG: My permission has never been asked, but the house has been visited late at night.

MR. DILLON: Do you leave your door open?

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): I wish to know how the permission he infers was "implied." Was any effort made before opening the door and walking in to know if the occupants of the house were willing?

MR. WALTER LONG: I am informed that the police constantly visit the houses of the residents in the district in which they are stationed, and that they are on the best possible terms with the population. No objection was raised to these visits on the part of the inhabitants. If, however, I had any reason to believe that the police exercised their powers in an improper way I would take care to see that regulations were issued to prevent it.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): Will the right hon. Gentleman say, for the information of English Members, what object the police serve in invading the privacy of these homes with or without permission?

MR. WALTER LONG: I assume that the police have a general duty in regard to the protection of life and property in their district.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): What was the purpose for which the police visited the house of the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

Horse Disease in County Waterford.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution adopted at the last meeting of the Waterford County Council, with reference to the spread among the horses in the county Waterford of the disease known as the South African disease; and whether the Government will bear the entire cost of horses destroyed by orders of the veterinary inspectors in the county Waterford, with the view of exterminating this disease, which was introduced into Waterford by artillery horses sent there on the conclusion of the war in South Africa.

MR. WALTER LONG: The resolution referred to suggests that a general order for the slaughter of diseased horses should be issued, but the Department of Agriculture consider that the requirements of the case have been met by the local order which has been issued, and which is applicable to the particular outbreak. A further local order will be framed if necessary. The reply to the last inquiry is in the negative.

Mr. POWER: Is it not the fact that the disease was introduced into Waterford by Army horses?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I do not know whether that is the case or not.

Mr. POWER: The Secretary for War has admitted it.

Carntall School-Mistress' Action.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in a case concluded in the Chancery Division, Dublin, on the 18th inst., at the suit of Miss Rose Sweeney, manual instructress of the National School, Carntall, county Tyrone, who sought an injunction and damages against Mr. William Coote, grand master of the local Orange lodge for conspiring to procure her dismissal from her position in the school, Mr. Justice Barton gave judgment in favour of the plaintiff, with costs; and whether, under the circumstances, he will see that Mr. Coote's action is brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor with a view to his removal from the commission of the peace.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The judgment in this case was only delivered a few days ago, and there has been no time yet to fully consider it or ascertain whether there may be an appeal.

Mr. DILLON: Is this the same gentleman who was charged with a similar offence in relation to the same school some months ago, and who paid heavy damages in order to avoid a public trial?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): In the event of an appeal, will care be taken that the Crown Solicitor for county Tyrone and the Solicitor-General for Ireland do not appear for a man who has been found guilty by a competent Court of an attempt to intimidate a peasant Catholic girl?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I cannot answer a Question of that kind.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Let the Irish Solicitor-General, who is present, answer for himself.

Mr. DILLON: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman answer my Question?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I cannot.

Mr. DILLON: I will raise the matter on the Estimates.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Is it intended to prosecute this man on a charge of boycotting?

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Is this one of the cases returned as an agrarian outrage?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I do press for a reply to my Question to the Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You had better give notice of it.

Mr. REDDY: When will this ruffian be removed from the commission of the peace?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order!

Knocklane (Sligo) Grazing Ranch.

Mr. WILLIAM McKILLOP (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board purchased a grazing ranch at Knocklane, Magherow, county Sligo, and that instead of dividing the ranch amongst the fishermen and the occupiers of non-economic holdings in the vicinity the Board has let it for grazing; and will he see that this ranch is divided up as soon as possible.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Board have agreed to purchase these lands, but cannot divide them until they become legally vested in the Board. The necessary proceedings will take some months, and in the meantime the lands have been let for grazing.

The Police and the Member for East Galway.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will now give the House the report which he has received from the county inspector in reference to the action of police at Cappatagle on 7th inst. in regard to the Member for the Division.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I can only read this Answer, which has already been circulated, by the permission of the House. I have received the following report from the county inspector of Constabulary, to whom this Question was referred:—"No violence was used by the police. Mr. Roche persisted in maintaining that he had a right to address his constituents and he was moved away from the crowd by my orders. I had first informed him that the meeting was proclaimed and that I had a copy of a proclamation which I would give him. I gave it to him when he had been moved about twenty-five yards away. He was not dragged, nor was he moved off his feet. One policeman held him by each arm. District-Inspector Heard did not order his men to drag Mr. Roche down. I was the very first person to go to Mr. Roche and tell him he could not address the meeting, and when he began to argue that he had arranged two months before to address his constituents I took hold of his coat and pulled him off the stile, about eighteen inches from the ground, on which he was standing. Mr. Heard, I think, also caught his coat and said he must come down. No roughness was used, when pulled he stepped off. I then told him he must move on and told the crowd to disperse. He was moved on as I have already mentioned. He was not moved fifty yards, not quite thirty yards. I heard him say, 'Is the county inspector here'? I did not tell the police to let him go. When they had moved him from the crowd they loosed their hold of his arms. There were no reporters present or regular representatives of the Press. Mr. Roche says he held on to the platform. There was no platform. There was a proclamation posted on the wall opposite Mr. Roche, not twelve feet from him. Mr. Roche must have been well aware the meeting was proclaimed. He had been staying the night with Father Fahy, and I myself had told Father Fahy of the proclamation. The police did nothing that was not perfectly consistent with their duty in preventing the holding of the meeting, and no violence was used to Mr. Roche nor any rough treatment that could be construed as violence."

Mountmellick Action for False Arrest.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in a case lately heard in the King's Bench, Dublin, before Mr. Justice Kenny, at the suit of a man named Carroll, against Constables Masterson and Cryan, Royal Irish Constabulary, Mountmellick, for alleged false arrest, and imprisonment, and assault, the jury found for plaintiff on all issues, and assessed damages at £100; and whether he will state, as Constable Masterson has been suspended from duty, what course he proposes to adopt with reference to Constable Cryan.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Judgment was only delivered in this case a few days ago. The Inspector-General has the matter under consideration, but I have not yet received his report.

Irish Agrarian Outrages.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that, during the year 1904, a total of 206 agrarian outrages were reported to the Inspector-General of Constabulary in Ireland, including twenty-eight incendiary fires; eleven killing, cutting, or maiming cattle; 124 cases of intimidation; thirteen injury to property; twelve firing into dwellings; and that in 188 cases offenders were neither convicted nor made amenable; can he explain why such a large proportion of offenders escaped the consequences of their acts; and whether he will take steps to strengthen the powers of the constabulary in discovering the perpetrators of these outrages, and bringing them to justice.

Mr. WALTER LONG: My hon. friend has correctly stated the facts, which are set out in the Return of Agrarian Offences recently presented to Parliament. The immunity from punishment of so many of the offenders arises to some extent from the fact that many of the offences are committed under the cover of darkness, and that in cases of threatening letters and notices it is difficult to prove the handwriting of the offender. I think, however, that the chief cause of this immunity is an unfortunate and unwise reluctance on the part of the victims of intimidation to come forward and give evidence against the guilty persons. It is quite obvious that constabulary action alone cannot completely overcome these difficulties, but if the sufferers would only seek the protection of the law, and if those members of the community who are entitled to share in the administration of justice would do their duty, I believe that disorder would be effectually grappled with. There is no ground for any imputation against the constabulary.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): In how many of the cases of alleged intimidation did the people send the intimidatory notices to themselves?

Mr. KILBRIDE: Seeing that there are 188 cases in which no one has been made amenable, can the right hon. Gentleman say how many of the offences were committed by the police themselves?

Mr. WALTER LONG: None.

Mr. DILLON: Was any person injured in any of these manufactured outrages?

Mr. MACVEAGH: How many of the cases of cattle-maiming and killing were the work of Sergeant Sheridan?

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): Does the right hon. Gentleman contemplate any further reduction of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Charge against Constable Reddy, Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say what was the result of the recent investigation held at Mountmellick by order of the Inspector-General of Constabulary into the charge made against Constable Reddy of using offensive and insulting expressions towards respectable residents of the town; and whether, seeing that this policeman was obliged to make a public apology before the County Court Judge at Mountmellick within the past twelve months, in a case in which he was charged with assaulting and using insulting language towards a resident in the town (which offence was alleged to have been committed outside complainant's door), he proposes that the services of Constable Reddy should be retained in Mountmellick.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Constable Reddy was found to have made an unbecoming observation, but it appeared to have been made jestingly and in reply to a remark addressed to him. He has been cautioned by the Inspector-General as to his future behaviour. In the second case referred to, an action was taken against the constable for a technical assault, which consisted in his seizing a man whom he found hiding in a gateway at night. There was no charge of using insulting language on that occasion. The County Court Judge justified the constable's conduct, but suggested that he should apologise, which he did. It is not intended to transfer the constable at present.

Land Purchase Agreements.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Clause 9, Form P, under the Land Purchase Act, 1903, gives no protection to the tenant from the day he signs the agreement until the sale is sanctioned by the Land Commission; and that one or two years may elapse from the date of the agreement and the confirmation of the sale, the tenant in the meantime being liable for his old rent notwithstanding his having agreed to pay interest to the Land Commission at £3 10s. per cent.; and whether, seeing that Clause 8 in Form F gives protection to the tenant between the date of his agreement to purchase and completion of sale, some similar protection can be given to the tenant in Clause 9 of Form P.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Form P is an undertaking signed by the tenant that he will purchase his holding from the Land Commission in case they purchase the estate of which it forms part. The signing of this undertaking does not alter the legal position of the tenant unless and until the Land Commission buy the estate. No ground, therefore, exists for making the arrangement suggested in the concluding query.

Mr. FLAVIN: But why the difference?

Mr. WALTER LONG: Because in the one case there is a definite and in the other only a conditional agreement.

Mr. FLAVIN: But have not the Estates Commissioners a right to either accept or reject the agreement?

Mr. WALTER LONG: No.

Mr. FLAVIN: I will ask the Attorney-General whether under Form F protection is given and inspection must take place?

Mr. ATKINSON: The hon. Member is probably wrong, but I had better have notice.

Mr. FLAVIN: Well, I am not paid a big salary like the right hon. Gentleman, but I am sure I am right.

Youghal Auxiliary Asylum.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to an inquest held to inquire into the circumstances attending the death of Michael Healy, an inmate of the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum, which took place on the 12th inst.; and whether, in view of the fact that the jury in their verdict urged a separate hospital for inmates suffering from infectious disease, and that the frequency of deaths from consumption and contagious disease is caused by the absence of isolation of such patients from other inmates, it is still intended to retain such cases in the auxiliary asylum.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It is the fact that the jury made a recommendation to the effect stated. The patient died of consumption, a disease which has only in recent years been recognised to be of an infectious nature. I am informed that, so far, a few of the largest asylums only have attempted to isolate such cases, but doubtless, as experience is gained, the question will receive further consideration.

Belfast Police and Medical Attendance.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state the result of the Inspector-General's inquiry as to why members of the Royal Irish Constabulary in C District, Belfast were obliged to seek medical attendance at their own expense other than that provided for the purpose.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Inspector-General found that no sufficient grounds of complaint against the medical attendant existed.

Mr. SLOAN: In view of the facts that came out, will the right hon. Gentleman agree to pay the expenses of the constabulary? Will the expenditure the men have incurred be refunded to them?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I will consider that.

Irish Judicial Officers.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if any communications, verbal or written, have passed during the past twelve months between the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and any Irish County Court Judges or Recorders on the subject of their retirement from the bench.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No, Sir.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Do I understand that no communications have passed, whether direct or indirect, oral or written?

Mr. WALTER LONG: That is the information given me by the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman has been again misinformed.

Newman Estate, County Cork.

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in connection with the sale of the Newman Estate, Dromore, Mallow, county Cork, it is proposed by the landlord to exclude from the scheme the holding of a tenant, Mr. T. O'Callaghan, D.C., although he holds under a judicial tenancy and is prepared to purchase on the same terms as the other tenants; and whether, in view of the fact that this case does not come under any of the sub-heads (a), (b), (c), and (d), which deal with the exclusion of holding in the Interim Report of the Estates Commissioners, the Commissioners will decline to sanction the advance in connection with this estate unless this tenant be included in the general arrangement.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The first part of the Question was answered on 21st February last.† As to the second part; the sub-heads referred to are merely examples of sufficient reasons for exclusion, and not a complete statement of such reasons. The advance to the landlord has been made.

Sneem Mail Delivery.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the mails used to be delivered at Sneem at 9.45 am., but that they are now only delivered at noon, and that it is consequently impossible for traders to reply to letters until the following day; and whether arrangements could be made so that the mail car should leave Headford at an earlier hour, and thereby ensure an earlier delivery of letters at Sneem.

Lord STANLEY: I will have inquiry made on the subject of the mails to Sneem and inform the hon. Member of the result.

Irish Lights Commissioners—New Appointments.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether additional appointments are about being made under the Board of Irish Lights Commissioners; and, if so, will he state at whose suggestion those appointments are being made, what expense they will entail, and will the additional expense come within the purview of the House of Commons.

Mr. BONAR LAW: Two additional appointments under the Commissioners of Irish Lights have recently been made. An assistant inspector of lights at a salary of £250 rising by annual increments of £15 to £350 per annum; a typewriting clerk at a salary of £60 rising by annual increments of £6 to £96 per annum. The appointments were proposed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights and were sanctioned by the Board of Trade after being considered by a special Committee appointed by them for the purpose. The additional expense will not come within the purview of the House of Commons, as it will fall upon the General Lighthouse Fund and not upon any Parliamentary Vote.

Foreign Pilots in British Waters.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the risk arising from the fact that fifty-nine foreign pilots are employed on our coast, he will consider the advisability of granting pilotage certificates for English waters to British subjects only.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): It is quite true that a certain number of foreigners are allowed to be pilots in our waters, although there are no foreign pilots registered in other countries. I have great sympathy with those who think that if we admit foreign pilots in our waters foreign countries ought to admit British pilots to their waters. The matter is engaging the attention of the Government, but I ought to add that I do not think the circumstances are productive of any serious national danger.

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† See (4) *Debates* cxli., 761.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Has any complaint ever been made of the way in which they discharge their duties?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather that the complaint would come when this country was at war with some country to whom these foreign pilots belonged.

Scottish Churches Dispute—Position of the Solicitor-General for Scotland.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the impending legislation promised by the Government on the questions in dispute between the United Free Church and the legal Free Church, it is with his knowledge and sanction that the Solicitor-General for Scotland appeared in the Court of Session, on Tuesday, May 16th, as counsel for the legal Free Church.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Solicitor-General for Scotland was interested in this case before he was Solicitor-General, and it would be a hardship to his clients to abandon the case which he has undertaken. It is perfectly consistent with the Treasury Minute that the Scottish law officers should undertake practice when it does not interfere with public duties. It is conceivable that cases might arise where there would be conflict. But the Solicitor-General ought not to have, and will not have, any part in the drawing up of the Bill which the Government propose to introduce before Whitsuntide.

MR. BUCHANAN: Is it in the interests of the legislation which the right hon. Gentleman is about to introduce for the purpose of settling this serious ecclesiastical difficulty that a member of the Government should be closely associated with one of the parties?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think this is a matter well understood in Scotland and Scottish practice. I confess that I think it is an unfortunate thing, but clearly the Solicitor-General is not to blame.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): He ought to have given it up when he was appointed.

AN HON. MEMBER: They never give up anything.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The only persons who would suffer if he were to withdraw would be his clients.

MR. DALZIEL: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that the Solicitor-General shall not appear in other cases?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I agree that he ought not to take on fresh cases dealing with impending legislation.

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE. VOTE OF CENSURE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given him private notice—whether, in view of the confusion created by recent declarations of Ministers with regard to fiscal policy, and in particular with regard to the proposed Colonial Conference, he will give a day on which we may bring forward a vote of censure on the Government.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): Before my right hon. friend answers this Question, I crave the leave of the House to ask him one other Question—whether, in the possible event of his giving facilities for another discussion, he will make an appeal to the Leader of the Opposition to offer at all events some expression of regret for the obstruction and insulting language levelled against a Cabinet Minister of the Crown for fifty minutes last evening.

MR. LOUGH: On a point of order, Mr, Deputy-Speaker, I ask you whether it is in order to attribute insulting language to the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not think that expression was very happily chosen. There was a great deal of clamour and noise, but there were no expressions which I think could be called insulting—at all events, none which reached my ears. There were some expressions which were of a somewhat offensive character, no doubt, but not what would be called insulting.

SIR W. HART DYKE: I will withdraw the word then, Sir, and substitute the word you used from the Chair—"offensive."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I confess I was somewhat surprised at the note which the right hon. Gentleman has sent me, wherein he talks about the confusion created by recent declarations of Ministers. There were two Ministers prepared to clear up that confusion, if it existed; they were prevented from doing so by the disgraceful scene which took place last night, and I did not notice that the right hon. Gentleman took any steps to prevent that disgraceful scene. I have, so far as I am concerned, no objection to giving time for the further discussion of the matter, interrupted in the manner which I have just described, provided that we have some undertaking that the debate shall take place under ordinary conditions of decency and fair play.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): Will the Prime Minister give that undertaking?

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Soares and Mr. Mooney; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Herbert Samuel and Mr. Murphy.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Sir George Fardell.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

Mr. J. W. Lowther.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) moved as an Amendment to reduce the tea duty from 6d. to 4d. He was, he said, very pleased that it had fallen to his lot to move that reduction, because if there was one tax to which he objected more than any other it was the tea duty. They had long been anxious for a free breakfast table, but so long as the present Government remained in office the vision of a free breakfast table receded more and more into the dim and distant future. When one considered the incidence of the tea tax he was driven to the conclusion that it was not defensible. It affected the rich infinitely less than it affected the poor. Very few wealthy people had suffered from the heavy duties which had been placed on tea by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but, on the other hand, there could be no doubt that the poorest classes had suffered to a very considerable extent. On the preceding day one of the hon. Members for Ireland complained very bitterly of the effect which the tea tax had on the peasantry of that country, and anyone who knew anything about the poorer classes was bound to admit the existence of the grievance. In his own constituency there were a large number of agricultural labourers who consumed considerable quantities of tea, and this tax had proved to them a very heavy burden. Many of these unfortunate people were in receipt of out relief, and it was well to bear in mind that the increase of the tea duty had not been followed by a proportionate addition to their out relief. This was a class of people who lived very largely on tea and bread and butter, and they were consequently the chief sufferers by the tax. Again, the Colonies had been hit very severely by it. Of course, the burden was borne by the consumer and not by the producer, but when a tax was put upon an article one effect was to reduce the consumption of it and in that way the producers were hit. It was an extraordinary fact that a Government which was always boasting of its interest in the Colonies should have chosen that particularly thick stick with which to beat them. No doubt the money was required by the Government, but the necessity arose to a not inconsiderable extent from the inefficiency of the War Office. If the recent speech of the Prime Minister meant anything at all, it meant that there should be a reduction in the War Office Estimates, but instead of that they had an increase of £1,000,000.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to go into that.

MR. SOARES said he did not propose to deal with the Prime Minister's speech. He was only pointing out it was because of the increase in the Estimates that this tea duty was imposed. He would like, however, to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how he reconciled his action in imposing this tea duty with the fiscal views he was known to hold? Did he consider that the tea tax was the best tax which could be imposed in the light of those views?

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the word 'sixpence' and insert the word 'fourpence.'"—(*Mr. Soares.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'sixpence' stand part of the clause."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said he was prepared to support the Amendment. Having failed on the previous day to get Ireland excluded from the operation of the tea duty, he certainly felt justified in trying to get it reduced to as low a figure as possible. He had never heard any solid argument in or out of the House in favour of the taxation of tea at such a high rate. The hon. Member who last spoke had suggested that there might be something to be said in its favour if it were an *ad valorem* duty. Having regard to the fact that tea at 1s. per lb., such as was consumed by the very poorest of the poor, bore exactly the same duty as the higher priced teas, he did think no valid argument could be advanced for keeping it at its present level. Undoubtedly a duty of 6d. per lb. was out of all proportion to the value of the article. Poor people had to consider every penny they spent, and when a protective duty to the extent of at least 50 per cent. was put upon their tea, they were driven to drink bad and deleterious preparations. In the days of the late Mr. Gladstone, who was one of the greatest Finance Ministers this country ever had, they very nearly approached their ideal of a free breakfast table, but since then they had travelled very far in an opposite direction. In the interests of the poorest classes of the country, and especially of the poor of Ireland, he supported the reduction of a tax which pressed the most heavily on the shoulders of those least able to bear it.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he wished to press the Amendment on the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to support his hon. friend in his endeavour to get the tea duty back to the point at which it stood before the war tax was put on. They had had increased taxes put upon beer, spirits, tobacco, tea, sugar, and other articles of consumption, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would agree with him that the first tax of which there should be a remission was the tax on tea. Indeed, the right. hon. Gentleman had already realised that by reducing the duty on tea by 2d. He thought the time had come when they ought to make a protest against these war taxes being retained, especially those taxes which had been placed on the necessities of life. He was not speaking particularly of the taxes on beer and spirits, about the removal of which he was not specially concerned, but in regard to the taxes on tea and sugar he thought they ought to take every opportunity of pressing on the Chancellor of the Exchequer the importance and necessity of at once removing them. Of course they would be told by the right hon. Gentleman that there was a certain amount of revenue to be raised, and a certain amount of expenditure to be met, and that, therefore, it was necessary to look round to see where he could get the money.

But he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that it would be better for him to direct his attention to the necessity for a reduction of expenditure. That was the best possible economy, and it would prove the easiest way of making a reduction in the taxation which was becoming such a great burden on the people.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said there could be no advantage in attempting to discuss on each individual Motion the far wider questions which were raised by the Bill, and he would therefore confine his remarks to this particular Amendment. This was a Motion to double the amount of the remission on the tea duty he had proposed. He had this year a much smaller sum than he could have wished for to devote to the remission of taxation, and, for reasons which he had already explained, he chose the tea duty as the subject of remission, and he was bound to say that under this Bill the proportion of taxation was more favourable to the indirect taxpayer than it had been for a long time. He did not, however, attach much importance to that matter, though in the remission of the year and the amount he had available for remission, it seemed to him obvious that this tax was the best subject for that operation. It was complained that the tax stood above what it was before the war. Sir Stafford Northcote had once laid down the very true dictum that no progress could be made with paying off the burden of a great war except by retaining some proportion, at any rate, of the war taxes. But his defence did not rest on that only. His predecessor, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, had pointed out that the difficulty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not to provide for the great and heavy expenses of a war which had lasted longer than any one had anticipated that it would, but to make provision for the increased expenditure that would remain in peace. For the expenditure of the present day they needed the money provided for in this Bil'. They could not dispense with the money that would be involved in the further remission asked for, and it was quite impossible for him to accept the Amendment.

It had been suggested by the hon. Member for North Cork that the tea duty should be an *ad valorem* duty. There was a great deal that was attractive in the idea, but there were great difficulties in its practical application. No one in the tea trade would give him the slightest encouragement in any effort he might make to convert the tea duty into an *ad valorem* duty, their view being that it would cause much disturbance and interruption in the trade as well as injustice to dealers and producers of different qualities of tea. An association which had been pictorially very active in this City recently, had not scrupled to use the arguments for a high *ad valorem* duty; but when a gentleman went to ascertain whether they were in favour of an *ad valorem* duty, they disclaimed all sympathy with the idea, although they had adopted this as the most effective method of stating their case against the tax. He did not think that was either very honest or very creditable to them. It was said by hon. Members opposite that the Irish people always drank good tea. If that were so, the effect of an *ad valorem* duty must be *pro tanto* to encourage them to drink inferior tea and discourage the drinking of the better class teas. On the other hand, if it did not change their taste—and so far as the Irish were concerned he did not think it would—it would impose a heavier tax upon them. He did not feel called upon to answer the Question of the hon. Member for Barnstaple as to how he reconciled the tea tax with his views on fiscal policy. That was not material to the issue before the House. He could only add that he saw no way in which the revenue necessary for the expenditure of the country could be better raised than the proposals he had put before the House.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said the right hon. Gentleman had rather objected to his hon. friend's action in raising on that discussion the question of national expenditure, but, in his opinion, that was the only opportunity which Members of the House of Commons had of raising that important question and of pointing out that all these extra taxes on tea, sugar, tobacco, and spirits were entirely due to the increased expenditure to which the Government had put the country in connection with the late war. With regard to the tea duty they ought to bear in mind that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, said that that was specifically a war tax. The unfortunate thing, however, was that although the war was now over the tax was still retained. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that it was necessary to retain a certain amount of taxation in order to pay off the debt incurred in time of war, but unfortunately that was not what the Government were now doing. They were not paying off the extra burdens imposed in time of war, and, therefore, he contended that the tea tax, as it was presumably put on as a war tax, ought now to be dropped. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the question of the importance to be attached to the proportion which direct taxation bore to indirect taxation. Well, he was bound to confess that he could not agree entirely with the right hon. Gentleman in the conclusions which he had drawn from those figures, but that question they would be able to discuss later on. The right hon. Gentleman had informed the House that he had a better way of raising revenue. Surely it was inconsistent on his part to make a proposal to the country which he believed to be not the best for the consumer and the taxpayers of the country. It was not a position in which he would like to find himself. But apparently the right hon. Gentleman had taken it in order to retain office. The Government were bound by the pledges they had given.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the subject of discussion is the tea duty.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said his point was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had informed the country that he knew a better way of raising the revenue than by means of the tea tax, and they were entitled to ask him what that way was. The Opposition were not responsible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer's inability to take off the 2d. put on as a war tax, and were entitled to protest against its continuance now that the war was over.

*MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had endeavoured to justify the tax on tea by his statement that he required the money, but on that ground they could justify any other tax by saying that so much money was required. The answer to that was that the expenditure of the country ought to be kept within reasonable limits. It should be borne in mind in regard to the duty on tea that a great proportion of the tea received in this country was now obtained from our own Colonies, and as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was closely allied to those Members in the House who believed in the preferential treatment of the Colonies, this extra 2d. per lb. in excess of the duty prior to the war was probably being retained to give to the Colonies in exchange for some advantage which it was suggested they could give to us but which was purely mythical. It certainly did appear unwise on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to keep up the extra duty on tea, a duty which was imposed for the purposes of the war, and the necessity for which ought no longer to be existent. In his opinion the duty was unfair, it was unnecessary, and had pressed extremely heavily upon the working people of the country. They heard a good deal now-a-days about the unemployed, and about people who were starving in all parts of the country, and it certainly did seem to him to be unwise that they should keep up a tax upon tea equivalent to 100 per cent. of its value whilst at the same time they had to legislate to find employment for the people who paid this tax. He thought, therefore, there were very considerable and strong reasons for rejecting the proposal of the Government.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had complained that those who had proposed the reduction of the tea duty had not suggested any alternative, but he thought that there was an alternative which might well have been used, and that was a revision of the duties upon licences.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That is scarcely relevant to the tea tax. At present the Committee is only asked to decide as to the imposition of the tea duty.

Mr. WHITLEY said he had respectfully to submit that in discussing whether the tax on tea should be 4d. or 6d. they were entitled to suggest an alternative method of raising the money, and he was attempting to do so. He was simply pointing out that there was an injustice in the present scale of licence duties, and if the Government would only level up those duties and make them to accord with the views which the Government expressed when the Licensing Bill was before the House they would produce the necessary revenue, and it would be unnecessary to tax the tea consumers of the country.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that for his part he attached very little significance to any equality between direct and indirect taxation in the allocation of revenue, but he seemed to think that hon. Members on the opposite side of the House attached very great importance to that subject. As one who had had to trouble the House two or three times on the point, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that none of them attached the smallest importance to any equality in the total sum raised by indirect or direct taxation. What they did attach importance to was the weight of taxation resting upon individuals, and they held that that weight of taxation should not be greater on the average poor man than it was upon the average rich man. They wanted a Committee of inquiry which would give them some authoritative information upon this question. Those of them who had honestly and laboriously made inquiries had come to the conclusion that the actual burden of taxation was heavier on the working classes than upon the middle and rich classes, and, so long as the contrary was not proved by an official inquiry they should feel it their duty to vote against the present unfair system of indirect taxation. It was a sound principle that each man should pay according to his ability to pay, and as that principle was not observed in our system of finance, it was their duty to vote against maintaining the tea duty at its present level. The right hon. Gentleman had justified this tax by saying that after the war it was necessary to keep on war taxation in order to meet additional charges which the war had necessitated. The present Government had increased the expenditure of the country by £49,000,000, and out of that total only £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 could properly be attributed to the war. The other £45,000,000 or £44,000,000 had nothing whatever to do with the war; and therefore it was absurd to justify this expenditure by saying that it was necessitated by the war. For these reasons he hoped his hon. friend would press his Amendment to a division.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not allow this debate to close without giving the House some assurance on the points brought forward by his hon. friend. Without discussing the whole question of war taxation, surely they were entitled to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, it was his intention to regard the present taxation as a permanent peace taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made many statements on this subject, and they wished to know whether if he occupied his present official position next year, he would keep in mind the pledge which had been given to the House, that the tax they were considering was a war tax which ought to be repealed with the least possible delay. With regard to the tea duty he was pleased that the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with it as he did, and he ventured to say that that was one of the principal reasons why the Budget was so generally popular, because the great mass of the people benefited by it. It was felt that there was a stronger claim for relief in regard to tea than any other article. The right hon. Gentleman, in introducing the Budget, admitted that he was largely influenced in the course he took by the fact that his proposal would benefit the Colonies. That showed that, after all, there was something in agitation, and there was very little doubt that, but for the vigorous agitation which had been carried on by the Colonies, the importance of the reduction he had made would not have been brought home to him. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them about his enormous sympathy with the Colonies, and surely that was a reason why he ought still further to reduce the taxation upon tea.

The case put that afternoon was absolutely reasonable. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not do anything which would be more gratefully received by all classes than to still further reduce this tax. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accept this Amendment he thought they would be able to find some other direction from which to raise the money which would be more acceptable to the House. While they were grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for small mercies they were not unwilling to accept others. This duty was one of the first things which ought to claim his attention. Of course they could not expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give them any outline of his policy in regard to a future Budget, but if he would tell them that he was fully alive to the justice of what they were demanding it would be received with satisfaction by the Committee. Some very distinguished authorities were absolutely at loggerheads as to the actual bearing of direct and indirect taxation, and they were to some extent in the dark as to the actual facts. Therefore he suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should listen to the appeal made by his hon. friend and consent to the appointment of this Committee. This had been asked for several times, and he could easily select certain financial experts in the House, thus showing some indication of a desire to meet the reasonable request which had been made from the Opposition side of the House.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he wished to support the appeal which had been made by his hon. friend for the appointment of this Committee. He thought there ought to be no tax at all upon tea. From a temperance point of view, and because tea was a necessity of life which came from other countries, it ought not to be taxed, more particularly when it was so largely consumed by the working classes. The ratio of indirect taxation was only 50 per cent. in the case of the English taxpayer, whereas in Ireland, with a much poorer population who drank more tea in proportion than the people of Great Britain, the ratio of indirect taxation was 72 per cent. A labourer in Ireland earning 15s. a week paid as much in indirect taxation as a labourer in England earning 25s. to 30s. a week. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not adopt a *non possumus* attitude, because there was a very large amount of public feeling in favour of lessening taxation on tea, and the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that he owed to the country and to the House some recognition for receiving his Budget so quietly, notwithstanding the large expenditure which it entailed. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would agree to the appointment of this Committee.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether he would consider the propriety of appointing a Select Committee or a Departmental Committee to inquire as to the way the tea tax affected the various classes of the community. On his side of the House they would like to see a Committee appointed to consider the whole question of the incidence of direct and indirect taxation. He was quite in favour of everybody contributing to the funds of the State, and he thought they should do so in proportion to their means. Such a Committee as had been suggested by his hon. friends might ensure a recommendation which would do away with the taxes on necessary articles of life. He believed tea was a necessary article to the working classes as they at present lived in this country. The tax pressed unduly on the working classes, and especially the class he represented. To agricultural labourers with 12s. a week the tax upon tea was a very great burden, and it was more than their means justified.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he could not undertake to deal at once with the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman opposite. Nobody who had spoken had contended that an inquiry into the tea tax alone would be of any value. What hon. Members really desired was an inquiry into the circumstances of the whole system of taxation. Those who had given any attention to the subject at all knew that probably a more difficult question to solve could not be submitted to any body of individuals, and the suggestion really was to devolve upon a Committee, he did not know exactly how denominated, duties essentially pertaining to this House—those of seeing that their system of taxation was just and fair. Hon. Gentlemen had some idea that possibly a Committee of that kind could demonstrate to the satisfaction of everybody and place beyond dispute the exact incidence of their present system of taxation. He believed that to be impossible. Great minds, learned men, deep students, had devoted a great deal of attention to that subject, but he was not aware that anyone had arrived at conclusions satisfactory to any other expert, and certainly not to conclusions which were generally acceptable. The task which would be propounded to a Committee would be, he thought, an impossible one, and unless they could show him there was practical work to be done, which he had not yet appreciated, he could not agree to appoint such a Committee as suggested. Of course, if the mover had a definite idea which he would care to discuss with him, he would be pleased to do so. He submitted, with all respect, that it was extremely difficult for a Minister or for the House to discuss a Bill of the present kind if on every clause, and at every stage, wide issues such as would be raised on a Second or Third Reading were raised again and again. He did not believe it had ever been attempted to be done before, and he ventured to submit it did not tend to the efficient discharge of business.

Mr. McCRAE said the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not quite fair to the House in giving this lecture as to how the debates should be conducted. This was the first Motion on which they could deal with direct and indirect taxation, and the hon. Members who had spoken had conducted the debate with due regard to the rules of the House. With regard to the appointment of a Committee, he thought that all the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said had rather strengthened the suggestion made by his hon. friends. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that he had not been able to come to a satisfactory conclusion on the question at issue, and that itself was a reason why he should agree to the appointment of a Committee. Great advantage had been derived from the Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. Certainly the Government had not dealt with the question as it might have done, but in the evidence, and in the conclusions which the Commission had laid before the House they had a valuable mine of information. He submitted that the same advantages would follow if the right hon. Gentleman consented to the appointment of the Committee which in this case had been asked. He wished to press on the attention of the right hon. Gentleman that the tea duty of 6d. now proposed included 2d. which was put on for war taxation. While it would not be fair to ask the right hon. Gentleman to outline his future policy with regard to finance, or what he intended to do in his next Budget, he might inform the House as to his views with regard to the tea tax remaining at 6d. in time of peace. The tax was equal to 75 per cent. of the value of the article, and that, he submitted, was far too high a percentage in time of peace. The Committee would certainly appreciate the statement if the right hon. Gentleman could really tell them that he did not consider 6d. the normal duty to be imposed on tea, and that he would take the first opportunity of bringing it back to the old level of 4d. which existed before the war.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer was exceedingly well advised in declining to remit this question to a Committee. What the difference was between direct and indirect taxation no man had ever been able to pronounce with certainty. One school of economists held that one kind of tax was direct, while another school held that it was indirect. The different schools of economists were not agreed, and therefore it would not be reasonable to expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer to agree where the doctors so considerably differed. Could any hon. Member say whether a licence was a direct or an indirect tax? He got no answer. In the rough-and-ready classification adopted by the ordinary financier at the Treasury it was classed a direct tax, but he himself held that it was absolutely indirect because the licensee put the charge on the price of the beer. Customs duties were generally held to be indirect, but he held that in one respect they were very direct. This was a very complicated question which a Committee could not solve. He went further.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: You are travelling away from the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said this was a Ways and Means Bill for raising money to meet the supply of the year. In his opinion it did not afford a field on which economists should assert themselves in moving the reduction of taxation. It was in Supply that should be done. Once they had agreed to the grant they must find the ways and means. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] He admitted that there might be different methods. When hon. Members came forward with a proposal to take twopence off the tea duty they should be prepared with an alternative.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: We have been ruled out of order on that point.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not rule the hon. Member out of order. He thought it was pertinent when a reduction was moved to show that there were other means of raising the money. Many hon. Members opposite were as anxious as he was to reduce the expenditure of the country, but he wished to impress upon them that this was not the best opportunity. It should be done not only in Supply, but when Works Bills were brought before them. Every one of these Bills ought to be strangled remorselessly. He very much doubted whether any reduction of taxation would be in the true interest of economy this year. The present need was to get rid of the load of debt, and that implied rather increased taxation.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said the hon. Gentleman had misunderstood the purpose for which the Committee was proposed. They were dealing now with the tea duty, and the argument that the tax was heavier on the poorer than the wealthier classes. The question of the whole incidence of these taxes should come before the Committee. He was assured that the consumer paid the tea duty. Of course, such a Committee as had been suggested would have to exclude from its purview the coal tax; but it would be its business to assess the proportion of taxation which ought to be borne by certain articles——

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon Gentleman is out of order in pursuing that line of argument.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said that he ventured to move last year that the tea duty should be reduced from 8d. to 6d. per pound, and he was glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken his advice. But there was another piece of advice he had given the right hon. Gentleman which had not been adopted. He felt assured that if the right hon. Gentleman had appointed a Committee on the incidence of taxation, the Committee might have approached more nearly than now to a solution of this great problem, which was to adjust taxation so that it should fall on the shoulders of those who could bear it with the least inconvenience. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, on his advice last year, made this reduction on the tea duty; but he wished that the right hon. Gentleman could have carried it further, because the very poor who bought their tea in very small quantities would not derive much benefit from the reduction. He was glad to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he introduced the Budget Bill, say that this reduction would be beneficially felt in every household in the United Kingdom. That was sound economic doctrine, because it was undoubtedly the consumer who had to pay this impost, although the foreign producer gained a certain benefit. He ought to say that in the case of tea it was the colonial producer in India and Ceylon. Undoubtedly the tendency of a large tax on a particular article was to diminish consumption. It should be remembered that India was a miserably poor country, and anything which diminished employment in India diminished the chances of these poor natives of obtaining a decent existence. India was the most thickly populated portion of His Majesty's dominions. It had been afflicted with plague and famines, and all the ills which afflicted humanity; and anything which could benefit that country would benefit this country. They heard a great deal about colonial preference and the desirability of doing anything we could for the benefit of the Colonies. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had conferred, by this reduction of the tea duty, a practical benefit on India. In Ceylon the tea industry had been the industrial salvation of the island, the population of which was the most loyal in the whole Empire. Ceylon, twenty years ago, was in a state of bankruptcy, and the tea cultivation saved it. The tea duty, imposed a few years ago, crippled that colony; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, if not this year, the next, accept a further reduction of the tea duty. He trusted that, by measures of economy, it might be possible to have a further reduction next year of 2d. per lb. on the tea duty. He had great pleasure in supporting the Amendment of his hon. friend, and he trusted that he would press it to a division.

Sir J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that this discussion had been largely academic, but he could not let pass the statement of the hon. Gentleman opposite who urged that such a tax as the duty tea fell wholly on the consumer. He was old enough to remember that the late Earl Russell said he was quite convinced that moderate indirect taxation fell in equal proportions on the producer and the consumer.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS said he had only quoted the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was following his lead. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman opposite did not also follow the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 217; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 170.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manc'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, J. H. M. Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B Inverness B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William

Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E. Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'rHamlets)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen, Hon.George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, RtHn LordG(Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords., N.W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn.James Henry Cecil
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir JohnH.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. Grant(Yorks., N.R
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(Edinburgh, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt.Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H C(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith, Rt. Hon. J. P. (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir CharlesG.E.(Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E.C(SAndrw'sB'ghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herb.John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)

Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, John Wynford
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Soares and Mr. Cawley.

Question put "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 215; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 171.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inverness B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.

Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas.(Staffords., N.W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier,Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T.(Denbigh
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. Grant(Yorks.,N.R
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long,Col.Charles W.(Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Iver,SirLewis (Edinburgh,W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ritchie,Rt.Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,H C(North’mb.Tyneside
Smith, Rt. Hon. J. P. (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuft, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw’sB’ghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E.(Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis

Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P.(Galway,N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, H. C. (Finsbury, E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York., E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred. W.(Norfolk,Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Russell Rea and Mr. Toulmin.

Clause 2:

MR. WHITLEY said the words he proposed to leave out appeared to him to be mere surplusage or else words put in to create a very fine and subtle distinction between "increased" and "additional" duties. The clause said, "additional" duties and Customs imposed by Clauses 2, 3, 4 of the Finance Act of 1900, including the increased duties mentioned in the fifth clause of that Act. He deprecated this legislation by reference, and could not see why the first words of the clause were not sufficient of themselves. But even if they were not, he thought it would have been much better drafting to put in "additional and increased" duties. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 2, to leave out the words 'including the increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act.'"—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN pointed out that Clause 5 of the Finance Act of 1900 stood upon a different footing to Clauses 2, 3, and 4. Clause 5 enacted duties some of which were described as "additional" and some as "increased," and unless in the present Bill they included the reference to the increased duties the form of the clause would merely repeal the additional and not the increased duties in the original Act.

MR. WHITLEY asked whether the duties mentioned in Clause 5 were not levied before 1900.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said those articles were taxed before 1900, but by that Act the spirit duty by which the duty on those articles was fixed was raised, and therefore it became necessary to increase the duty on those articles.

MR. WHITLEY said he thought the right hon. Gentleman had rather thrown the blame back on the Act of 1900. The matter, he thought, could be remedied in the present Bill, if, as he understood, the first part of Clause 5 recited only the additions to the existing duties imposed an account of the war, whilst the second part of the clause recited the new duties, the additional duties, imposed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the hon. Member was quite accurate.

MR. WHITLEY thought it was a pity that a method of this kind had been adopted, because it prevented the Committee from arriving at the actual amount of the duties imposed on these articles on account of the war, especially the minor articles. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman at some future time would see his way to treat these articles on the same basis as tobacco, beer, and spirits. He begged leave, after the right hon. Gentleman's explanation, to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. FLYNN said that by Section 2 of the Finance Bill an additional duty of 4d. a lb. was placed on all tobaccos. Had it been placed on high-priced cigars he would not say anything more about it, but it was imposed on all kinds of tobaccos, especially those cheap tobaccos which were imported into Ireland, in respect to which he thought the increased tax of 4d. ought to be repealed. By the extent to which the price of an article was increased the industry concerned in the manufacture of that article was penalised, and the growing industry of tobacco manufacture in Ireland had been seriously injured by the imposition of this additional duty. Ireland was not so rich in industries that she could afford to have any of them interfered with or handicapped, and he submitted that it would be perfectly easy by means of a sub-section to relieve the Irish tobacco industry of this imposition. A certain class of Irish tobacco was largely consumed by the working classes both of this country and of Ireland. Many working men would rather forego their breakfast or dinner than their pipe, and it was no abuse of language to say that to many of the poorer classes tobacco had become a necessity of life. It was one of the few alleviations of their lot of unremitting toil, and the working classes of Ireland felt it rather hard that this modest luxury and almost necessity should be taxed more heavily for the purpose of carrying on a great war to which they were always opposed. But the war had been over for nearly three years, and yet the taxes were maintained. He had not moved in reference to the Customs duties on beer and spirits; it was only right that they should bear their fair share of taxation, but he did claim an exemption in favour of Irish tobacco. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would probably give the stereotyped reply that money must be obtained. The amount involved, however, was so small, in comparison with the Budget as a whole, that he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to make the moderate concession asked for. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 8, at end to add the words, 'Provided, however, that the additional duty of fourpence the pound imposed by Section two of the Finance Act, 1900, shall not apply to unmanufactured tobacco imported into Ireland as from the first day of July, nineteen hundred and five.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. FIELD said he had just received a telegram from the tobacco manufacturers in his constituency asking him to support this Amendment. The manufacturing aspect of the question should not be lost sight of. It was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to co-operate with any attempt to prevent American trusts from monopolising the retail businesses in the country, and Irish manufacturers were seriously handicapped in their endeavours to compete with those trusts by the taxation they had to bear. The duty of 4d. operated gravely against the manufacture of tobacco, and the small allowance asked for by this Amendment would be of great assistance. He submitted that Ireland had an exceptional case for relief in this matter and that the growing of tobacco should be encouraged in every possible way in order the more successfully to cope with the foreign competition which was daily becoming more formidable.

MR. FLAVIN joined his hon. friend in protesting against the continuance of this war taxation upon the poorest of the poor. The question was of importance from the point of view, not only of taxpayers generally, but of consumers of tobacco, English and Irish, in view of the fact that the Imperial Tobacco Company of America had secured practical control of the retail market. There was absolutely no competition, consequently no protection for the poor consumers, other than that supplied by the independent Irish tobacco manufacturers. But because the Irish manufacturers had to face the increased duty of 4d. the American combine were placing on the market an imitation of Irish roll tobacco at cost price in order to destroy the independent firms who had stood out from the combination. He believed in healthy competition and fair profits. The practical control of the tobacco trade by one syndicate was a serious matter for the working men of the country. Great credit was due to firms like Gallahers', who had had the wits, energy, and capital successfully so far to stand outside the ring, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to encourage such firms in their endeavour, even at loss and injury to themselves, to give the people the benefit of healthy competition. He was sorry that the average English manufacturer did not show a more enlightened spirit, and this was only an example of the way in which they took a selfish and narrow view of this matter as opposed to the welfare of the masses. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the grounds he had stated, first, in the interests of the poorest of the poor, and, secondly, in the interests of those independent firms who had stood outside the combination, and who were placing a good article on the market. He thought such firms ought to be encouraged. The Imperial Tobacco Company had made up its mind to drive all independent men inside their trust or else ruin them by unfair competition. In the interests of Irish industries the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to do something to protect them, and thus increase the amount of employment in Ireland.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he agreed with the hon. Member that in the progress of our commercial life and the world's commercial life trusts and great combinations were beginning, and probably would continue, to play a much larger part than had been the case in the past. Consequently, it would be necessary for any Government to watch their operation, and to see whether any regulation was necessary to prevent great private combinations from becoming a public danger. He did not think that case had arisen yet, but the matter was one which any Government must keep under observation. Other countries had deemed it necessary to have such legislation in contemplation, and in some instances had actually passed legislation on this question. He thought in the near future they might have to direct their attention to the new state of things which had been created. He thought he could show to the hon. Member that the particular Amendment now before the House was not the proper method by which his object should be pursued, and that it would not attain the end at which he aimed. He had spoken of the trade which was of special interest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer because it furnished a large portion of the revenue. He had stated that the tobacco trade in Ireland was at the mercy of a foreign combination. He thought he was wrong in saying that any foreign combination seriously menaced that trade. No doubt there had been a fight between a foreign and a home combination, which arose out of the attempt made to invade our own market by a great foreign trust. There was a sharp battle, but not a very long one, and it resulted in the defeat of the foreign combination, which came to an agreement with the home combination practically to the extent that they should not invade our market. Whatever disturbance there now was in the trade was not due to a foreign combination, but was largely due to a domestic combination. The hon. Member was mistaken in supposing that the combination he alluded to included all the British firms. The Imperial Tobacco Company was a very powerful and a very large combination, but if the hon. Member made inquiries he would find that a very considerable number of firms still stood outside that combination in this country.

MR. FLAVIN: Yes, but they are trying to force them inside.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said there was still a considerable number of firms in England who had stood outside. The hon. Gentlemen's Amendment would favour Irish firms in regard to Irish trade, and one of his arguments was that it would enable them to resist this combination. He wished to point out that it would give no assistance to firms which stood outside the combination in the rest of the United Kingdom. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment pleaded for it on the ground that it would encourage Irish manufactures. He was glad to think that this was a most prosperous industry in Ireland, employing many hands, and he hoped it was profitable both to the country and to the people who carried it on. The Amendment would introduce a complication into their system which would be extremely difficult, because it would pick out for special favour one or two manufacturers to the detriment of all other manufacturers, whether forming part of the combination or not. As a matter of fact it would be protective in its nature as against the foreign manufacturers. He hardly needed to pursue that question, because, as they were all aware, the Government was not going to propound any changes of that character during the present Parliament. He was not insensible to the possible danger of these great industrial combinations, nor to the fact that they were a proper subject for the attention of the Government, because they might, in the course of their development render changes in our laws necessary which were not necessary when such great combinations were unknown. It was evident, however, that they could not deal with that question by a single small Amendment of this character, and he assured the hon. Member that it would not produce the result which he desired.

Mr. FIELD asked the right hon. Gentleman to answer his point as to the encouragement of tobacco-growing in Ireland.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was afraid that the question of tobacco-growing in Ireland would not be in order upon this Amendment.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: No, it would not be in order.

Mr. FLAVIN said in regard to this matter they were not selfish and did not want any special treatment. What concession they made to the Irish manufacturers he was quite willing should be given to other manufacturers. He was glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that some manufacturers in this country stood outside the combination. He suggested that they should also give them exemption and encourage them to stay outside the combination. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must be aware that the Imperial Tobacco Company were already in possession of the greater part of the tobacco trade of the United Kingdom. The proper time to tackle this trust was not after it had ruined all its opponents by unfair competition, but before it had grown to a fully-developed tree.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said this Amendment was intended to provide an exemption in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Union. His hon. friend thought the Amendment should be used to help independent tobacco firms who stood outside the combination. He wished to point out that on the Second Reading of this Bill it was amply proved that Ireland could not be successful in its industries unless some abatement was made in the taxes imposed upon the country, and there was no tax upon which an abatement could more properly be allowed than on the tobacco tax. This was an article which was specially mentioned in the Act of Union. He was quite ready to admit that but for the Act of Union the argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his predecessors would have a great deal of weight. It was said that the poor man in Ireland was no worse than the poor man in England in regard to this tax, and, that therefore there was no injustice. His answer to that was that the representatives of the Irish nation were in the Imperial Parliament because of the policy of the Act of Union. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer and his predecessor had repudiated the Act of Union, but it might interest the House to know that the Act contemplated an abatement to Ireland on this particular tax. One of the grounds on which the taxation on tobacco and a number of other articles was to be calculated was the relative value of the exports and imports of the different countries. He might mention in passing that they were unable to arrive at the relative value of the exports and imports because the figures could not be ascertained. The figures were absolutely denied to them, so that they were unable to say precisely how much they were overtaxed. He thought no more suitable abatement could be given in the case of Ireland than that proposed by his hon. friend who moved the Amendment. They were entitled to a more sympathetic answer than the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given. When Ireland was declining in wealth and population, and when taxation was increasing, the least the House of Commons could do should be to give this paltry abatement.

MR. FLYNN said he should have liked not to press the Amendment to a division, but after the reply of the Chancellor of the Exchequer there was no other course open. Surely this war tax ought not to be continued in a country whose representatives opposed the war, especially when the war had been over for three years.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 97; Noes, 236. (Division List No. 172.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Ellice, Capt E.C(SAndrw'sB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. CharlesFredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Philipps, John Wynford
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Flynn and Mr. Flavin.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hon. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor

Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col.H.F(Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt.Hon. J.(Birm.
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn J.A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale,Rt.Hon.Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,Sir R.B(InvernessB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fitzroy, Hon.Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,Philip S.(Warwick,S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, SirAugustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen, Hon.George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, SirE.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, RtHnLordG(Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords.,N.W
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier,Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kennaway, Rt. Hn.Sir John H.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn.Grant (Yorks.,N.R
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long,Col.Charles W.(Evesham)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,Sir Lewis(Edinburgh,W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Pirie, Duncan V
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,H C(North'mb.Tynesid
Smith, Rt. Hon. J. P. (Lanark
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col.Sir C.EH(Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he wished to move that Clause 2 should be left out of the Bill. That clause reimposed the war taxes on beer, spirits, and tobacco imposed in 1900. The House was beginning to be tired by the constant reiteration of these taxes put on ostensibly for a short period. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer had got to admit full responsibility for what had been done in that regard by his predecessors. The additional duties on beer, spirits, and tobacco, for the purposes of war expenditure had caused very great inconvenience to traders, and there was a pledge on the part of the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman that they would not be permanently retained. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had devoted his mind to getting rid of these additional taxes he might have done so by this time. There was a definite pledge given that when special money was raised for a great emergency, as soon as that emergency was over the special taxation would cease; and yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer renewed these taxes every year. The nation had a right to expect some relief from the war taxation in time of peace. An effort ought to be made to practise economy. The truth was that the Government had seemingly forgotten their pledges in regard to this matter, and he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to treat it in a perfunctory manner, but to tell the Committee when he could see his way to sweep away these war taxes.

He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer was getting as much money from the duties on beer and spirits as he would get if the extra duties were taken off. The extra beer tax, which was now renewed, was practically 1s. per barrel. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his predecessor got from the beer tax in 1900, when the duty was 1s. per barrel lower, compared with what he got from that tax this last year. And what amount did the spirit tax produce before the additional 6d per gallon was imposed, compared with that now received by the revenue. It was admitted that a tax could be raised above a point of productivity. He believed that great distress had been caused to the brewing trade by the extra tax on beer, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had lost revenue, rather than gained it, by the additional tax. The right hon. Gentleman should have taken warning from the experience of one of his predecessors who lost revenue by raising the wine duties by 25 per cent. He would be very glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give some pledge that in a reasonable time these war taxes would be removed.

Mr. WHITLEY said he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could inform the Committee what effect these additional taxes had had upon the consumer. His impression was that these additional taxes on beer and spirits had led to the deterioration of the quality of these articles, and that the persons who sold these articles had to recoup themselves at the expense of the public. In the case of spirits especially, it led to the consumption of immature spirits which was provocative of violent crimes. Then the beer duty had also lowered the quality, which was to the detriment of the consumers. He was sorry that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had given up the practice of his predecessors, in bringing forward these new taxes, in warning the House of the necessity of exercising the strictest economy. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol lectured the House annually in the interests of economy; but the present Chancellor of the Exchequer accepted the existing high level of taxation, and did not propose any substantial reduction in taxation. The Amendment raised the whole question of war taxation; which would now appear to be annexed for the permanent requirements of the nation.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he did not attach the same value as did his hon. friend to the annual lecture of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol when Chancellor of the Exchequer. At one time, he himself was inclined to praise the right hon. Gentleman the

Member for West Bristol as a sound financier; but all the right hon. Gentleman's statements evaporated in smoke. Only the other day the right hon. Gentleman delivered a vigorous address in the interests of economy; but why should he not make any effort in the House of Commons itself? He, himself, liked the method of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer better, although he regarded the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol as one of the ablest Members of the House. He objected to the continuance of war taxation, unless it was for the purpose of paying off war expenditure. War taxation should not, otherwise, be maintained in time of peace.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that it would be a futile proceeding on his part to pretend to forecast the course of the revenue or expenditure, or to indicate in advance what might be the character of the Budget next year. He had not the figures for which the hon. Member for West Islington asked, but he could give them if a Question was put on the Paper. It was, however, certain that a tax might be raised to such a high point as to diminish its value as a revenue producing engine, though he did not believe that the disappointment experienced in recent years had been due to the level at which these taxes had stood. Other circumstances had arisen to influence their productive power, such as changes in the social habits of the people and bad conditions of trade in the last year or two. He was surprised to hear an expression of sympathy with the brewers from the hon. Member for West Islington, and he could only wonder what the hon. Member would have said if he had selected these duties on beer and spirits for reduction this year in the Budget. It was said that the beer-drinker now received a less desirable article than previously. He did not believe that there was any proof to support the suggestion that a more "thirst-producing" article was being manufactured and consumed in consequence of these war duties. What had actually happened was that the price of a glass of beer had remained the same, though the amount of water in it had been increased. In the case of beer and spirits, therefore, there was no reason to suppose that a slight rise in the tax had seriously affected the consumption, or that there had been a deterioration in quality in the sense of adulterating beer with the object of producing thirst in the consumer. It had, however, led to the sale of a greater proportion of lighter beer. He declined to make any hazardous prophecies as to circumstances he was unable to forecast, but he could not dispense with these duties in the present year.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said that the Government had no right, without adequate explanation, to continue taxes specifically put on for war purposes; and on that principle alone this clause ought to be opposed. The Government had no right to continue in time of peace taxes which were imposed for war purposes. He thought the Committee ought to take this opportunity of expressing its opinion on the larger principle, and on the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had not submitted this year any scheme or indicated any date when it might be anticipated that they might be relieved of this war taxation.

MR. LOUGH thought he had some reason for complaint that the figures for which he had asked, and which would have been of very great use in this debate, had not been given. He also complained that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had mixed up in his arguments two facts which ought to have been kept separate. The right hon. Gentleman had mixed up the elasticity of revenue with the promotion of consumption, which was quite a distinct matter. He asked the Committee to note that the right hon. Gentleman had not disproved his statement that the increase in these taxes had not had the desired effect, and that the violent action of the Government had simply resulted in the decline of revenue. With regard to those of his friends who might hesitate to support proposals of this kind, which would mean a reduction of the tax on beer and spirits, he would remind them that excessive taxation on those commodities did not promote increased temperance but simply made those who craved for liquor poor as well as drunken. In view of the answer he had received from the right hon. Gentleman he must press his Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 237; Noes, 160. (Division List No. 173.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Fredk. George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middles'x
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, G. M. (Edinburgh)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellice, Capt E. C (S. Andrw's Bghs
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt Hn Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edw. Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (York, N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye

Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, HC(North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, RtHnJ.Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col.SirCEH (Sheffield)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir WilliamH
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C E.(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G.E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M‘Crae, George
M‘Fadden, Edward
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Phillipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, Sir R.Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thos. (W.Monmouth
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tillett, Louis John
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)

Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Soares.

Clause 3:—

MR. FLYNN said the Amendment he was about to move raised much the same principle as his previous Amendment, and an equally good case could be made out for relief in connection with the Excise duties as with the impositions already dealt with. He submitted that it was not unreasonable to demand that an exemption should be allowed from the additional duty on whisky consumed in Ireland—for that was what the Amendment amounted to. Probably the hon. Baronet the Member for the Camborne Division would not agree with the suggestion that the duty on so wholesome and exhilarating a beverage as whisky should be struck off. But there was good and bad whisky.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): What is good whisky?

MR. FLYNN said that good whisky was a pot-distilled spirit sufficiently matured to decompose the element known as fusel, and resulting in the fragrant, mellow liquor known as Irish malt whisky. A duty of 11s. per gallon on such an article was altogether opposed to any principle of fair play or justice. In 1853 the duty in Ireland was only 2s. 3d. as against 7s. 10d. in Great Britain, but between then and 1860 the duty was increased to 10s. in both countries, and now stood at 11s. Therefore, while the duty had increased in England and Scotland by 33 per cent., in Ireland the increase had been no less than 400 per cent. Could that be called fair treatment? He submitted that instance of the dual system of taxation to the consideration of the hon. Member for Durham. If whisky was to be drunk it was better that a good wholesome liquor should be consumed, but a high tax tended to bring on to the market a large quantity of immature, raw, and impure spirit, which produced intoxication, led to acts of violence, and often resulted in insanity. He regretted the form of the Bill precluded him from moving a larger reduction of the duty, but, especially as there could be no Customs difficulty in this connection, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accede to the moderate suggestion he now made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 15, at the end, to add the words, 'Provided, however, that the additional duty of sixpence per proof gallon imposed by Section 7 of the Finance Act of 1900 shall not apply to spirits consumed in Ireland.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said this Amendment was one of a series placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for Cork, intended to raise the same point in different forms, and directed towards securing for Irish manufacturers or consumers a privileged position as compared with manufacturers or consumers of similar articles in other parts of the United Kingdom. The question of the establishment of different rates of Customs or Excise duties in the two countries had already been discussed at length on two occasions. He had never contended that such a differentiation was impossible, or denied that it had existed. But it must not be assumed from that that there was no objection to it, or that it would not be a troublesome and costly proceeding. The percentage of collection was much decreased by the unification of arrangements which now prevailed. If this proposal was carried out the disadvantages would be great and the benefit small. Even if the Committee thought that some article of consumption should be taxed at a lower rate in Ireland that in England, he could not think that it would be this article that they would select for preferential treatment.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said he could not follow the right hon. Gentleman when he said that the cost of collection would be very much increased. The Customs authorities knew where the spirit was going to and consequently there would be no difficulty. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Budget he spoke of the loss sustained by the revenue in regard to the spirit duties, which he attributed to a wave of sobriety which had been passing over the country. One thing which had caused great anxiety to medical men all over the kingdom was the extraordinary increase in the percentage of insanity; and a good deal of that insanity was alleged to have been caused by the consumption of raw and immature spirits. In most of our great manufacturing centres an epidemic of methylated-spirit drinking was breaking out. The fact that this tax stood at such a high rate led to the putting on the market of a spirit which must be bad for the consumers. If they put such a high tax on the spirit the vendor could not keep it long enough to enable him to get rid of the fusel oil. It was not the distiller who paid the increased price but the bonder. If a bonder had two sorts of whisky, one only two years old and the other ten years old, the ten year old whisky, when he came to pay the duty upon it, must be a dearer article than the whisky he had kept for two years only, and the result of that was that when they put a high duty on the bonder he must reduce the age of the whisky, and he had to sell it before it had had time to mature. Once they put a high tax on whisky they reduced the consumption in a way, but they also, at the same time, brought into the market more raw spirit. Medical men had asserted that one of the greatest causes of the increase of lunacy amongst the poorer classes was the consumption of this raw spirit. The time had come for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to put an end to this additional tax. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had held out the same promise. He did not know whether the present Chancellor of the Exchequer called it a temporary tax or an additional tax. Surely it was about time that this additional tax, put on for a specific purpose which was now over, was taken off. It was a just claim that the tax in Ireland should be restored to the figure at which it stood before the war.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 73; Noes, 283. (Division List No. 174.)

AYES.

Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gilhooly, James
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leng, Sir John
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Fadden, Edward
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Rickett, J. Compton
Roche, John
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Flynn and Mr. Mooney.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds.)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex H. (Shropsh.)
Brown, G. M. (Edinburgh)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burt, Thomas
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M (Lanark
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andrw's Bghs
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N. E.)
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin&Nairn
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir EW (B'ry SEdm'nds
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higham, John Sharp
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnson, John
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Kitson, Sir James
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks. N.R.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Moss, Samuel
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newnes, Sir George
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Percy, Earl
Philipps, John Wynford
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James

Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt.Hn. Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, HerbertL.(Cleveland)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Shackleton, David James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H.C.(North'mb.Tynesde
Smith,RtHnJParker (Lanarks)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col.Sir CE.H(Sheffield
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn Sir.William H
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E (Taunton
Welby,SirCharles G.E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H(Yorks.)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.

Clause 6:—

MR. FLYNN said that his Amendment ought to be received with sympathy by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was a great deal of parrot talk with reference to equality of taxation, but hon. Members might not be aware that for half a century after the Union Ireland was exempted from the income-tax. In 1853 it was imposed for seven years; but more than fifty years had now elapsed; and yet it had not been repealed. Both Sir Robert Peel and Lord Palmerston had declined to extend the income-tax to Ireland. Mr. Gladstone, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, did. Lord Beaconsfield, however, spoke strongly against it; and his was admittedly one of the first names in the litany of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Other Englishmen had also expressed similar opinions. The repeal of the tax would not involve any change in Customs or Excise; and he, therefore, hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider the question. Every penny taken out of the country in the form of income-tax was a drain on Irish resources and on employment in Ireland.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 35, after the word 'charged, to insert the words 'in Great Britain.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that on each clause, as it had been discussed the Committee had been asked to accord to Ireland some advantage over the other parts of the United Kingdom. He had not been inclined to accept any other proposals, and it seemed to him that the income-tax payer had the least claim of all to preferential treatment. He could quite understand rich men living in Ireland if they could be exempt there from income-tax. Wealthy people would be inclined, perhaps, to put their fortunes in any refuge where they would be free from taxation; but he could see no ground for granting this remission to rich men because they happened to live in Ireland. They had been told that one of the defects in the present financial system as it affected Ireland was that so small a portion of the taxation came from the direct taxpayers, and yet the hon. Member would have him abandon the most important source of direct taxation.

MR. O'MARA said the right hon. Gentleman had repudiated the suggestion and the plea that Ireland was entitled to any exemption or abatement whatsoever, but he could not expect the Irish Party to agree with him in that. They took their stand on the fact that by the Act of Union they were so entitled. The right hon. Gentleman could not have it both ways. At the present time Ireland was exempt from the tax on armorial bearings and the house tax. They were either entitled to exemptions and abatements or they were not. If they were not why were they exempted in these two matters, and if they were entitled then the right hon. Gentleman's argument did not hold good. He claimed that they were entitled, and that the country was pressed down by the system of taxation forced upon it by Great Britain. It was not justice that a poor country like Ireland should be taxed in the same way as a rich country like Great Britain. Everyone in the House would acknowledge that the income-tax was one of the best tests of the capacity of a country to pay taxes, but while the proportion of income-tax paid was only one to thirty-two of that of Great Britain, in relation to taxation as a whole it was one to fifteen. Ireland was so poor a country that some exemption should be granted from the heavy taxation under which even Englishmen were groaning. If her proportion of taxation were reduced to the ratio of one to thirty-two it would be only just and fair, and in accordance with what was contemplated under the Act of Union.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. WHITMORE, Chelsea): The hon. Member is now repeating what he was saying when I called him to order.

MR. O'MARA said he would merely point out that the income-tax afforded one of the readiest means in existence of granting an abatement or exemption to Ireland. That country could be exempted from the income-tax just as she was exempted from the house tax, and every Irish representative would rejoice if such an exemption were made. It was a striking fact that for fifty-three years after the Union there was no income-tax at all; it was first levied in England for the specific purpose of lightening the burdens on English industries, and Sir Robert Peel did not allow it to be extended to Ireland. At the time of the great famine a sum of £2,000,000 was granted to the people of Ireland to meet the ravages of the famine, and Mr. Gladstone proposed the imposition of an income-tax for a certain number of years to repay that money to the Imperial Exchequer. But the amount had been repaid over and over again and still the tax remained. On every possible ground, moral and economic, Ireland was entitled to exemption or an abatement.

MR. FIELD held that it could not be denied that the income-tax pressed with undue severity upon Ireland. Irishmen, however, objected not only to the tax itself but to the manner in which it was assessed. The whole subject, as it affected Ireland, deserved far more attention than it had hitherto received. In England there were local assessment committees acting in conjunction with an official assessor, but in Ireland there was an official appointed by the Government upon whose valuation——

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means from the remainder of this day's Sittings.

Whereupon Mr. Jeffreys, the Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 6:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 35, after the word 'charged,' to insert the words 'in Great Britain.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. FIELD said he rose to support the Amendment because overtaxation in Ireland constituted an enormous commercial drain on the country. He called attention to the fact that the exemption that they now claimed was never questioned until half a century after the Act of Union, and even at the present moment there were taxes imposed in England that were not levied in Ireland. With regard to the income-tax, various Chancellors of the Exchequer had always opposed its imposition in Ireland by reason of the fact that Ireland was a poor country. It was, in fact, imposed by Mr. Gladstone, "the wizard of finance," as he was called, in 1853, and then it was only imposed as a temporary tax for the purpose of paying off the Consolidated Loan of £4,500,000 which was required to establish the Poor Law system in Ireland. Never since that time had the income-tax been remitted, although it was then understood, though it was never stated, that it was to be taken off at the end of seven years.

He, himself, was in favour of direct rather than indirect taxation, but the difficulty in this case was that they had no means of judging the amount of indirect taxation that was paid in Ireland; they had no statistics of the duties on exports and imports on which to go, and they had never had a separate vote of credit for Ireland. Therefore they had been unable to judge the amount of indirect taxation. The only way they had of obtaining restitution from the Government in respect to over-taxation was by means of the incometax. The position he took up was that the condition of Ireland at the present time was infinitely worse than it was in 1853. They had less wealth and less population, and therefore, from an economic point of view, were in an infinitely worse position now than then. The point of view he wished to put before the House was that this was not to be considered as a question of money alone: it must be considered from a wider point of view; it must be considered from the point of view of fair play in the administration of financial matters between the two countries. When he imposed this tax Mr. Gladstone made what was practically a declaration of policy when he said in this House that the income-tax was not to be looked upon as a permanent charge upon Ireland, but was to be only regarded as a temporary measure imposed for the purposes of paying off the Consolidated Loan. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman that he had proved his case under the terms of the Union, and under the terms on which this tax was imposed on Ireland, and he appealed to the right hon. Member to say whether they had not at least justice on their side and solid common-sense reasons for claiming that its remission might be considered by the right hon. Gentleman.

He contended that the income-tax paid by Ireland was disproportionate in amount to that paid by England and Scotland because there was a difference in the valuation in England and Scotland. In those countries there was a system whereby local assessment committees assisted the Government Department in assessing the tax, but in Ireland the whole responsibility for the valuation was placed in the hands of a non-elective Commissioner from whom there was hardly any appeal. If the Valuation Bill now before the House was passed into law Ireland would be the poorer by £1,000,000 a year. He did not wish to make this a Party question, because it was a purely economic and financial question. It was upon a question of taxation that England lost America, and it was only by resisting the income-tax that they could bring before the Chancellor of the Exchequer their grievances. He trusted before this debate closed some hon. Gentlemen representing Ireland on the opposite side of the House, whose constituents suffered from the same grievance as the rest of Ireland, would join in the protest they were making against the overtaxation of Ireland.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had dealt with this question in half-a-dozen speeches already, and he could only say now that even if it was admitted that Ireland was overtaxed, and that a remedy must be found, it was not likely that hon. Members would choose a remedy that would relieve the well-to-do in Ireland while leaving the less well-to-do to suffer from their present burdens.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said the Ulster Members had not taken part in this campaign for the exemption of Ireland from taxation because they believed in the Imperial destinies of the United Kingdom, and were prepared to bear their share of its burdens.

MR. FIELD said when he advocated the remission of the income-tax he admitted he preferred direct to indirect taxation, but the only way in which they could resist overtaxation in Ireland was by attacking the income-tax, because the statistics did not enable them to judge of the value of the export and import duties. He agreed that the income-tax payers were the persons who ought to pay most, but there was no denying the fact that this was the only way to resist taxation.

MR. O'MARA said he was not astonished at the remarks which fell from the hon. Member opposite for he and many of those who sat with him, and even two hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Treasury Bench, were the lineal descendants of the traitors who sold the blood of their countrymen as well as their country at the time of the Union.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 64; Noes, 162. (Division List No. 175.)

AYES.

Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Johnson, John
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bell, Richard
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Brigg, John
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Cameron, Robert
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim. S.)
Crombie, John William
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R (Tower Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fitzroy, Hn. Edw. Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin & Nairn
Gordon,MajEvans (T'r H'mlets
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, SirEW.(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gurdon, Sir W Brampton
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath,SirJames (Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higham, John Sharp
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kennaway,Rt.Hn.Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks. N.R.
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver,SirLewis (Edinburgh,W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore,John Throgmorton
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Richards, Thos.(W.Monmouth)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Shackleton, David James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tillett, Louis John
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd,SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wylie, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MR. J. H. LEWIS rose to move an Amendment to extend the principle of graduated income-tax. His proposal was that the rate in respect of incomes between £1,000 and £2,000 should be 1s., £700 up to £1,000, 10d.; £600 to £700, 9d.; £500 to £600, 8d.; £400 to £500, 6d.; £300 to £400, 4d.; and £200 to £300, 2d. The object he had in view was to have a debate upon the graduation of the income-tax. This was by no means the first time that this question had been raised in the House of Commons. He could assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a very large number of the members of his own Party outside the House were keenly interested in this matter, and if he saw the letters he received from Conservatives and Unionists who were in favour of this graduation he would be surprised. The principle had become an integral part of our fiscal policy, and he wished to see it carried further. Mr. Pitt once said that a man who could afford to keep two carriages should be charged on each at a higher rate than the man who could only afford one. That was a sound and equitable principle of taxation, but it was not put into operation until the passing of Sir William Harcourt's Estate Duty Act. The burden of taxation under the present system pressed more heavily upon the poor than upon the rich. When taxes were high the rich man had only to deprive himself of comforts and luxuries, but the poor man under those circumstances would have to deprive himself not only of comforts, but also of necessaries. He held that Customs duties were paid by persons of small means in greater proportion to their incomes than persons of large means. The Government had been asked to levy an *ad valorem* duty upon tea, tobacco, and the different classes of wines. At the present time they levied exactly the same duty upon the cheapest kind of tea, tobacco, and wines as they did upon the most expensive kinds, notwithstanding the enormous difference in the cost. Some change in this respect was absolutely necessary in order to adjust the pressure of taxation. Sir William Harcourt said—

> "If a tax is to be maintained at a high figure it is necessary that we should make some attempt to adjust its pressure so as to make it less intolerable to those least able to bear it. Everybody must agree that the pressure of the income-tax is most severe upon the class of men of small and moderate incomes."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had declared that if the income-tax was to be maintained at anything like the high rate it was at when he spoke, it would be absolutely necessary to make some further change in the incidence of that taxation. Some hon. Members held that the Estate Duty Act had redressed the inequality between the taxation of the man of small income and the man of large income. But at the time of the passing of the Estate Duty Act the yield of the income-tax was £17,000,000, whereas it was about £30,000,000 now, so that in order to redress the balance a new estate duty must be passed or a graduated system of income-tax established.

They had repeatedly asked that this question should be inquired into by a Committee. He could not see what earthly harm it would do to the Government to have this question of the incidence of taxation inquired into by an impartial Committee. He asked the Prime Minister last year whether he would not appoint such a Committee or make it one of the terms of reference to the Departmental Committee already appointed, and he replied that anybody with ordinary industry could ascertain the facts for himself. So far as his own industry went, he could say that the present system of levying income-tax was outrageous. The hon. Member for Cleveland had made some very industrious investigations, and his conclusion was that what the working man paid was equivalent to an income-tax of 1s. 7d. in the £, and that statement had never been contradicted upon any official authority. He thought it was simply monstrous that men receiving £800, £8,000, or £80,000 should, so far as the income-tax was concerned, be paying exactly at the same rate. He thought the time had come for the extension of a principle which had been admitted on all hands to be sound and equitable. The question was, How was that principle to be extended, how far was the operation to proceed, and what were the difficulties in the way? Sir William Harcourt had occasion to consider the question of a graduated income-tax in 1894, and he said—

> "I shall be asked the question if you are graduating the income-tax down on the lower scale, why not graduate it up on the larger incomes in proportion. There is nothing to be said against such a system; indeed, there is every argument in its favour. The difficulties which lie in the way are of an administrative and practical nature which, as yet, I have not been able to find means to overcome."

What were the difficulties which so far had been raised to a graduated income-tax? First of all, they were told that there was the difficulty of testing the aggregation of a man's income. With regard to the individual himself, he thought there would be no difficulty in aggregating his income. If he did not know what his income was he ought to know. They compelled tens of thousands of people to aggregate their incomes in order to secure remissions. If that could be done in regard to small incomes why could it not be done in regard to larger incomes? The poor people had to do it, and why should there be any difficulty in aggregating larger incomes? As to testing the aggregation of incomes that was a task which did not present any insuperable difficulties. A man, for instance, might present his list of investments and the income he derived from them. How were they to test the correctness of that aggregation? His income would either consist of profits he derived from business or from investments. So far as the profits from business were concerned, the Inland Revenue authorities had just as full information now as they could reasonably expect to possess. It was their business to ascertain what the profits from a man's business amounted to now, and there would be no greater difficulty in testing that in the future than in the past. So far as income derived from banks and companies were concerned, there would be no difficulty whatever on the part of Somerset House in testing the returns, because they had there the lists of shareholders. The Chancellor of the Exchequer shook his head, but he could not see any insuperable difficulty in making an alphabetical list, which would only mean the employment of unskilled clerical labour of the lowest description, and there would be less difficulty about it than in compiling the London Directory. The work was of a purely clerical character, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would state in what respect there would be any great difficulty in testing the aggregation of a man's income so far as Somerset House was concerned.

He recognised, however, the force of the objection which was entertained by hon. Members on both sides of the House that the present system of taxing the profits at the source was far more convenient than a system of aggregation of incomes, although he did not say that that objection was insuperable. He had some observations to make upon that. In the first place he thought it was desirable that people should know when they were taxed, and he was afraid that there was a good deal of extravagance due to the fact that people did not realise that they were taxed. In the case of indirect taxation many people did not realise that they were being taxed. He thought it would be a very good thing if the smaller income-tax payers were obliged to aggregate their incomes, and a system of directly graduated taxation would in the end be far more just to the individual taxpayer. He recognised the difficulties in the way of abolishing the collection of the tax at the source, for they were very serious, and very strong objections were entertained to it on both sides of the House. He was not, however, at all sure that those objections were insuperable, but they did exist. He wished to draw attention to the Amendment on the Paper standing in the name of the hon. Member for Elland, which entirely obviated the difficulty of collecting the tax at its source. His hon. friend the Member for Elland had an Amendment on the Paper proposing a different scheme of graduation, and he would not, therefore, press his own Amendment.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked whether it would not be for the convenience of the Committee to take the whole discussion on one of the Amendments.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said it would, but he had understood the hon. Member was going to move his Amendment, otherwise his speech was out of order.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS said that in that case he would move the Amendment of his hon. friend, namely, that the income-tax should be 10d., and that persons with incomes between £5,000 and £10,000 should pay an additional penny, and with incomes of over £10,000 an additional 2d. It was unnecessary for him to add very much to what he had already said with reference to this Amendment. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would feel that this question, which came up annually, deserved the careful consideration of the Government. It was felt by a large number of persons outside the House that the present incidence of the income-tax was not just, and that a greater share of the national burdens should fall on those who were receiving incomes of £5,000, £10,000, and £20,000 a year than was the case at the present time. That, after all, was the vital question which underlay this Amendment. Would the Government take its courage in both hands and make these great incomes bear a fair share of the national burdens? He did not want to see any class of the community casting off any portion of its fair share of taxation, but he felt that the present incidence of this tax was not equitable as between class and class, or between man and man. He trusted that next year they would see an advance made in the direction he had indicated. He begged to move.

Question proposed, "That the words 'one shilling' stand part of the clause."

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said the object which his hon.

friend and himself had was very much the same, although the two Amendments proposed different methods. They were constantly told in this connection that the authorities at the Treasury, and all past Chancellors of the Exchequer, were against them. In the last debate on the subject the Chancellor of the Exchequer cited the authority of Mr. Gladstone against the graduation of the income-tax, but it must be remembered that in Mr. Gladstone's time the income-tax held a very different position in national finance to what it did now. Then it was a small and temporary tax, regarded as an emergency war tax; now it was the pillar of our national finance, standing at 1s. in peace time with no apparent prospect of reduction. No doubt the official view of the Treasury was at present against the practicability of the graduation of the income-tax, but that opinion had hitherto been generally based on the impossibility of breaking up the present system of collection at the source. He was glad, therefore, his hon. friend had accepted his Amendment, the proposal of which was to leave the income-tax as it was now, except that it should be considerably reduced, but that, over and above the present tax, there should be an extra tax on large incomes levied on certain individuals who would have to state their incomes and declare them as they were, in some cases, declared at the present time.

He should like to deal with a few of the objections which had been brought forward. The right hon. Gentleman said that to require men with large incomes to declare those incomes was inquisitorial, and that consequently it would lead to considerable irritation. It was worth while considering that part of the income-tax at present was levied on incomes which were arrived at by inquisition. In the case of Schedule D declarations had to be made as to professional incomes. The Chancellor in the speech he made recently quoted an informant who said he was amazed at the evasions that occurred in arriving at the incomes under Schedule D, yet that was not given as a reason for declaring that income-tax should not be imposed on those incomes. It was true that any system of taxation requiring this kind of declaration would cause irritation among the people who had to declare their incomes; but the unpopularity and inconvenience would be less in their case than the present heavy tax was on people of very small incomes, who were suffering very severely under the taxation, and whom they wished to relieve by this proposal.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer relied most on the argument that it was not worth while undertaking the graduation of the income-tax, because as a matter of fact there would be a very small increase of revenue from it. Of course, it was a more or less speculative question how much revenue would be raised, and he did not want to go into the figures with the view of disputing them. They were speculative figures, even although drawn up by Treasury officials. The right hon. Gentleman came to the conclusion that a moderate graduated income-tax would result in an increase of £3,000,000 gross revenue, realising altogether £1,500,000 net revenue, and he asked the House whether it was worth while raising that amount from a tax of this kind. It was worth while mentioning that in so far as the income-tax was an emergency tax in case of war—to take the best concrete instance—it was obvious that we might place a heavy tax on big incomes in time of national necessity, and, therefore, it need not be assumed that for purposes of necessity a great deal more than £1,500,000 could not be got. Taking the calculation of the right hon. Gentleman as showing the ordinary normal advantage which we could get from a graduated income-tax he held that £1,500,000 increase was not so despicable. He believed that that was a very moderate estimate; but, even so, it was an amount worth having if they could get it in this legitimate and desirable way.

The real importance of the proposal lay in the general feeling which was growing up against the high income-tax as it was. The last time the question was debated in the House some very strong things were said about the tax standing at a shilling in time of peace, and it was stated that unless some effort was made to reform the incidence of this tax it would create well-merited resentment in the country. The remedy suggested was indirect taxation, because it would not be felt. To his own mind that threw an interesting light on the action of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in dealing with the question of a graduated income-tax. The graduation of the income-tax was one of the alternatives to protective taxation, one of the alternatives to the indirect taxation which existed now, and to the indirect taxation proposed by fiscal reformers. The action of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had been peculiar compared to that of his two predecessors. They had practically on two successive occasions given a promise to the House that when the investigation was made by the Committee appointed to look into various matters connected with the income-tax the question of the practicability of graduation should also be included.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: As a matter of fact my predecessor did not promise that. It was alleged the other day in the House that he did promise it.

MR. TREVELYAN said he practically promised it. He did not give a definite promise, but the right hon. Member for West Bristol did so.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I thought the hon. Member was referring to my immediate predecessor, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon.

MR. TREVELYAN said the occasion to which he was referring was when the right hon. Member for Croydon was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and when the right hon. Member for West Bristol was going to act as Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire into questions concerning the income-tax. On that occasion his hon. friend withdrew an Amendment similar to that which he had on the Paper that day because the right hon. Member for West Bristol gave the House to understand that he would raise no objection to the question of graduation being inquired into by that Committee. The right hon. Member for Croydon did not indicate that he would refuse to allow that question to be sent to the Committee. These two right hon. Gentlemen, holding the Treasury view that graduation was practically undesirable, had both admitted that the question ought to be inquired into, but neither of them had banned graduation as a thing which was undesirable in itself if only it could be proved to be practicable. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken abundant opportunity and trouble to prove that graduation was undesirable, not dealing with the question of practicability. He was hostile to the proposal, and probably saw that the more effective was the taxation of luxuries the less chance would there be for taxation of food. He begged to second that Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 36, to leave out the words, 'one shilling,' and insert the words, 'tenpence, and every person whose total income from all sources upon which income-tax is now paid exceeds five thousand pounds shall pay an additional tax upon the following scale:—Incomes over five thousand pounds up to ten thousand pounds at the rate of one penny; incomes over ten thousand pounds at the rate of twopence.'"—(*Mr. J. H. Lewis.*)

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said when the hon. Gentleman took upon himself to explain the thoughts that influenced his actions, he travelled into a region of speculation far removed from the truth and the subject before the Committee. The subject of the graduation of the income-tax was interesting, but not novel. He had often heard it discussed, and if he continued to have the honour of a seat in the House he would probably hear it discussed in future, and in some happy distant time leaders of the Party sitting opposite would be defending the attitude now taken by himself, and pointing out the impracticability of the proposal. To the hon. Member who moved the Amendment he would say that the possibility of evasion and of deliberate fraud was extended with every extension given to the voluntary assessment of individuals for the tax. The smooth working of the gigantic financial engine depended on the tax being collected automatically, and the yield of the tax had steadily increased since the adoption of the practice of collection at its source with less dependence on individual payers. All his predecessors had taken the view that it was undesirable to disturb that practice.

The proposal of the hon. Member for Elland was one to reduce the contribution of the direct taxpayer to the expenditure of the State. This would mean the reduction of the revenue for the present year, and the contribution would have to be made good out of indirect sources of taxation. The suggestion also was that a fresh impost should be placed upon every one who was in possession of an income over £5,000. A proposal of this kind must fulfil at least three conditions—(1) that such a scheme should be possible and feasible; (2) that it should produce a substantial gain to the revenue; (3) that this gain should be purchased at a reasonable cost of inconvenience and trouble, not merely to the revenue authorities, but to the general bodies of taxpayers. He did not believe that this plan would fulfil in practice any one of these conditions. The opinion of his predecessors had been referred to. One hon. Member had stated that his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon had pledged himself to refer this question to a Committee for inquiry. That was not the case. He had the authority of his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon for saying that he was not in favour of graduation, and did not intend to refer the question to the Committee that was to have been appointed by him. He admitted that the right hon. Member for West Bristol did at one point of the session of 1902 contemplate a reference of this question to a Committee, but no opinion of his would be found indicating that the proposal was either practicable or possible. These opinions were not confined to one side of the House. The late Sir William Harcourt said that he had carefully considered the subject, and had arrived at the conclusion that there could not be a graduated income-tax unless the whole sources of income were inquired into, and that would be so unpopular that it could not be maintained. The right hon. Member for West Bristol was equally strong in his opposition to graduation. He concurred with the view of the late Sir William Harcourt that to call on every one to declare his income would be to make just that kind of inquisition into private affairs which had prevented the income-tax from being adopted in many foreign countries, while it would be certain to destroy our power to maintain it in this country.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

A calculation which he submitted to the Committee last year showed that a moderate graduation would only produce a very moderate result. The income-tax affected a great deal of movable property; and if the tax were graduated to the amount which had been suggested, there would be an enormous inducement on persons to remove their income outside the area of taxation. There was a great deal of income that could be treated in that way without any fraudulent evasion, but by legitimate measures. [OPPOSITION cries of "How?"] People could remove their property abroad and so escape the tax. It would be quite impossible to aggregate accurately the incomes of these persons, while the hon. Member allowed nothing for the cost of creating a new system of collection and a new procedure by which this additional revenue was to be collected under the new method of assessment. If the tax were doubled, and the maximum raised to 2s., it would result in nothing but infinite disturbance and dislocation to business, in addition to great friction between the revenue officials and the citizens from whom the tax was collected. It would be an inadequate return for all the sacrifices which had to be made in the so-called interest of relief to the taxpayer, while it would afford no consolation for the disturbance that would be created. He admitted that an income-tax of a shilling was too high in a time of peace, and he was anxious to lower it. But it was by lowering, and not by tampering with the methods of its collection that they could remove inequalities and injustices, and so make the tax, as it should be, a great and convenient instrument in our national finance, capable of rapid, almost instantaneous, expansion in any great emergency.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said that his hon. friend did not profess that the particular scheme of graduation he had submitted was ideally perfect. What was wanted was that the House should agree to the principle of graduation. He, himself, had never concealed his opinion that there was very great difficulty in graduating the income-tax beyond a certain figure; but in the last few years opinion on the subject had advanced considerably, and he believed that there was now a general feeling, both in the House and in the country, that there ought to be a practical inquiry into the question whether, assuming the principle of graduation, it could be carried out in detail with due regard to the income-tax as a great engine of finance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had quoted Mr. Gladstone as being against the principle of a graduated income-tax; but he would point out that the right hon. Member for West Bristol had pledged himself to an inquiry into this matter.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that his right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol had, he believed, changed his attitude in regard to this question. When he contemplated the reference of the matter to a Committee, the right hon. Gentleman explained that he himself did not believe in the graduation of the income-tax.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he admitted that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had always said that he did not see how a graduated income-tax could be carried out practically, but that he did think that it would be of advantage that a Committee should be appointed to make full inquiry into the matter. That was also the position taken up by his right hon. friend the Member for Berwick.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he always had taken a considerable interest in this subject. Previous to the passing of the Death Duties Act he felt that the poor paid a larger share than the rich of taxation, and that that was inevitable under the present system. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment had made a somewhat aggressive attack upon rich people. He was not one of them himself. but he did not think this question should be approached with the idea of attacking people who flung away money in luxuries. The real question was, What would be the effect of a graduated income-tax on the Exchequer? That was a point which should be very carefully gone into. He had got a Return which threw a good deal of light on the subject. Under Schedule D there were half a million of people whose incomes ranged from £150 up to £50,000, and there was the startling fact that those who had a gross income of £50,000 and upwards were only fifteen in number.

Mr. DILLON asked if the hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee how these aggregates were arrived at.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY said it was the Return of those who were assessed under Schedule D of the income-tax in 1901. It was quite true that those persons might have other sources of income besides that included under Schedule D. Now the gross income of those persons tabulated in the Return amounted to only £1,500,000, and if they were to tax those persons who had over £50,000 another shilling, it would simply yield £70,000 or £80,000 more, so that unless they put on a very high differential tax the Exchequer would only receive a comparatively small sum. If any graduated system were tried the tax on large incomes would have to be made so large to get in any return as to amount practically to confiscation. After all, the men who made large incomes had made the country rich and prosperous and provided employment for the people, and he could not think it would be wise or politic to make it almost a crime for a man to be successful in business. He agreed that it was most desirable that all those who were rich should contribute handsomely and liberally to the taxation of the country, but if they took the whole income of every person over £50,000 referred to in the schedule he had mentioned, they would not receive an amount equal to what a one shilling tax produced upon incomes of £160 to £200 a year. From the standpoint of public policy it was not advisable to discourage men from being successful in trade and commerce.

The whole question of taxation and the burden of the income-tax were subjects which required careful consideration. To his mind the burden was enormous at the bottom of the scale. He felt that the great increase in the expenditure of the country was a matter of very great concern. He was not so much concerned about the burden of the rich as those who were at the bottom of the scale who paid income-tax on incomes of £160 to £200, for these were the men who paid more taxation in proportion to income than any other class. He thought, however, the payment of income-tax was a matter that needed inquiry. In many cases people paid in an unfair proportion. Further, he had always advocated that there should be a separation between spontaneous and industrial income. In his opinion the tax would not be made fairer by the introduction of a graduated system, which would, he believed, be so irritating as to render the collection of the tax almost impossible; but by careful adjustment it might be made simply a tax upon income, which it was not always now, and a different scale might be introduced for persons who earned their income by their labour and for those who received their income from inherited property. He would hail with satisfaction an inquiry into this question, which he had so many times solicited from different Chancellors of the Exchequer.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had used certain figures without apparently understanding what their meaning was. He had told the House that in the Returns for income-tax only fifteen persons were given out of nearly half a million as persons who enjoyed incomes of over £50,000 a year. If he looked through the list of Members of the House of Commons he would find a far greater number than he had mentioned with incomes of more than £50,000 a year, and if he looked through the list of the Members of the other House, he would find a still larger number.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: Not in trade.

Mr. McKENNA said that outside the Houses of Parliament there were many more persons with incomes of more than £50,000 a year. The figure which the hon. Member had given was so obviously false that he was surprised——

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY said that he never said that was the total number of persons with incomes over £50,000 a year. All he said was that that was the number given in the column he had quoted, and that it might be accepted as a fair proportion.

Mr. McKENNA: What was the use of taking figures which did not represent the total number of rich persons and saying that if their incomes were taxed under a graduated system they would only get a sum equivalent to a tax of one shilling on the smaller incomes? He was surprised that the hon. Member had brought those figures forward.

Upon one point he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer's memory was a little at fault. There had been an implied promise by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer that the subject of graduation of income-tax should be submitted to the Committee. He remembered some time ago the hon. Member for Flintshire moving an Amendment in favour of graduating the income-tax, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol on that occasion said he would be willing to act as Chairman of that Committee, and upon that statement his hon. friend withdrew his Amendment. It was understood that the graduation of the income-tax was to form part of the discussion upon that Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon was then in the House, and although it was perfectly true that that right hon. Gentleman did not get up and say that he agreed that this subject should be included in the discussions of the Committee, he allowed his hon. friend the Member for Flintshire to withdraw his Amendment under the belief that the subject was going to be discussed. Therefore, it was entirely out of the question for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to allege that a promise had not been given that the subject of the graduation of the income-tax should be submitted to the proposed Committee. The principle of graduation had been admitted by the House over and over again. What they complained of was that, while the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward reasons to show that the particular form of graduation proposed would not work from the point of view of raising revenue, he was not entitled to refuse to give them the benefit of seeing if a Committee could not find some way in which the principle could be worked. It was obvious that there were various ways. They might tax an income either on its receipt or expenditure. Why not place a heavier duty upon inhabited houses, estimating the amount of every person's income upon the amount he paid in house rent? That system would admit of extension to any degree. As a matter of fact, with rare exceptions, most people spent upon house rent in a reasonable proportion to their incomes. If they put a graduated tax upon house rent they would be putting a very fair tax upon the expenditure of rich men who would be taxed in respect of all their houses, and in this way they might arrive at some form of the graduation suggested. He agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if they had to assess their own incomes the assessment they would make would probably be very moderate ones, but in the case of expenditure there was no means of disguising it, and they would only have to hit upon certain items in order to get at the man who spent a great deal. Consequently the men who spent most would be taxed most.

The hon. Member who spoke last argued as if the very rich man should not be taxed more than the poor man. In fact, he seemed to think that the rich ought to be exempt because they were the foundation of the wealth of the country, and the means of providing a good deal of employment for the people. In his opinion, if the rich were taxed more there would be just as much labour employed as at present. The argument of the employment of labour as applied to the rich man was absolutely fallacious. The object of a graduated system was to take more from those who did not feel the burden of taxation in order to relieve those who did feel it most keenly. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not treated this Amendment in the spirit in which it was moved. Their object was to impress upon the House the need for some alteration in their system of taxation which would enable a larger proportion to be borne by the very rich classes. He thought this was a question which ought to be submitted to a Committee upstairs, and although he agreed that individual assessment was not the best form, nevertheless he should vote for this Amendment because this was the only means by which they could force upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the need for this great subject being discussed.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 188; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 176.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middles'x
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James

Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish,V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cross, Herb.Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, Wm. Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar,SirT.R (TowerHamlets)
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hn. Sir JosephC.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes,RtHn.Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edw. Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon,Maj.Evans(T'r H'mlets
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene,SirE.W (B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy,Laurence (Kent,Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,SirJames(Staffords.N.W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford,W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kennaway,Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawson,John Grant (Yorks.NR
Lee, ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter (Bristol,S.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, SirLewis(Edinburgh,W
Majendie, James A. H.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Montagu, Hn.J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Chas. Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,HC.(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith,RtHnJ.Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Vincent,Col.SirCEH (Sheffield)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E (Taunton
Welby,SirCharles G.E. (Notts.)
Whiteley,H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, SirW.H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brown, G. M. (Edinburgh)
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice,CaptEC(S Andrw'sB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Field, William
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Furness, Sir Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.

Harcourt, Lewis
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thos. (W.Monm'uth
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, A. (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Thomas, JA(Glamorgan,Gower
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse,SirJT (Hudd'rsfi'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Herbert Lewis and Mr. Trevelyan.

Mr. McCRAE, in moving to provide that all incomes under Schedule D, derived from trades and professions and not derived from investments, should be subject to a rebate of fourpence per pound, said there was a growing feeling that the same rate of income-tax might press quite differently upon the individual according to the source from which his income was derived. This was especially shown if they considered the difference between incomes derived from the labour of the individual and incomes derived from realised wealth in the form of investments. Parliament had already given effect to the principle that an income-tax might press unequally on individuals, inasmuch as abatements were made on incomes under £700. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether he objected to the Amendment on principle or only on the ground that there would be difficulties in the way of its operation. John Stuart Mill was in favour of the taxation of temporary and precarious incomes on a lower scale than permanent incomes, and Mr. Gladstone agreed with the principle because he stated that the income-tax as a whole bore too hardly upon intelligence and skill and not hardly enough upon property. In 1853, when that statement was made, the produce under Schedule A was double that under Schedule D, but the proportions were now reversed, so that the grievance was even more pressing. In case of war or trade depression incomes derived from trades or professions were reduced in amount while taxation was increased, so that the holders of such incomes suffered in a double sense as compared with the holders of incomes derived from investments. He submitted that his proposal was an equitable one, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give it favourable consideration.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 36, after the words 'one shilling,' to insert the words, 'provided always that all incomes under Schedule D derived from trades and professions and not derived from investments shall be subject to a rebate of fourpence per pound.' "—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there inserted."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN suggested that before the hon. Member claimed the support of Mr. Gladstone for this proposal he should re-read again his speech of 1853.

Mr. McCRAE: I did so to-day.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if the hon. Member would read it once more he would see that Mr. Gladstone, so far from giving any encouragement and support to a proposal of this kind, devoted himself in the speech referred to to proving that it was unjust, undesirable, and impracticable, and so recently as three years ago he was declared by the late Sir William Harcourt to have disposed of the matter once for all. Did the hon. Gentleman propose to give a rebate on the dividends of the large shareholder in a trading company, who might be said to derive his income from trade ? On the other hand, did he propose to tax at the full rate the landlord who was constantly engaged in the management of his estate ? Surely the hon. Member must see that his Amendment would not at all realise the object he had in view, which was partially to exempt from the income-tax people whose income was due to their own personal exertions. If the matter were gone into carefully, it would be seen that it was impossible to distinguish between one source of income and another. The extremes in the scale were no doubt far apart, but they in-

sensibly approached each other, and it would be impossible to set with accuracy or equity the point at which a dividing line should be drawn. Mr. Gladstone, in the speech referred to, held that the only persons who did not derive their incomes from their own personal exertions were the Fund-holders. It would not be a wise policy for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to single out the Fund-holders as the only people who were to be deprived of any exemptions and abatements given on the income-tax.

Mr. McKENNA said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not dealt with the principle involved. The wording of the Amendment covered the objection taken in reference to incomes derived from investments.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked what was to happen to incomes derived partly from trade and partly from investments in that trade.

Mr. McKENNA said that in practice it would be perfectly simple. If a manager of a business had some shares in the company by which he was employed, his salary as manager would be income derived from trade or profession, and the yield of his shares would be income derived from investments. There was, however, this objection in principle to the proposal of his hon. friend. Speaking generally, all accumulated money was the savings of income from the individual exertions of the owner or had been received by inheritance. In the first case income-tax had been paid, and in the latter case the capital sum had been subjected to estate duties. Therefore, in either case the property had already borne taxation, and that was a reason why the Amendment should not be accepted. The object of his hon. friend could be secured only under a system of graduation of income-tax, and he regretted he could not support him on this occasion.

Mr. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said there would be no difficulty in meeting the objection raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If a man had capital invested in his business it was the simplest arithmetical process to charge interest on the capital invested, and deduct it from the total profits of the business in order to ascertain the profit derived therefrom.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. DALZIEL said it might facilitate progress if the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated how far he intended to proceed with the Bill to-night. Would he be content if he got Clause 6?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had hoped to make further progress with the clauses, but he thought it would be unreasonable to ask the Committee to embark on Clause 7 at that time of night, and so he would be content with getting Clause 6, provided hon. Members met him in the same spirit and facilitated progress.

Mr. McCRAE said the matter dealt with in his next Amendment was rather technical, but most important. He submitted that the rule referred to should be made compulsory, as in its present form it worked very inequitably as between trade and other forms of property. If a merchant made an extra £1,000 in his business, he had to pay income-tax upon it, and then, if invested, the same £1,000 was liable to income-tax, whereas if a proprietor derived the money from the renewal of a lease, and could show that he was going to invest it, it would be exempted from income-tax. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would look into this matter with a view to putting both forms of property on the same footing.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 4, after the word 'granted,' to insert the words 'Provided that the following words in Rule 5 of No. 2, Schedule A, s. 60, 5 and 6 Vict., c. 35, "Of all fines received in consideration of any demise of lands or tenements (not being parcel of a manor or royalty demisable by the custom thereof) on the amount so received within the year preceding by or on account of the party, provided that, in case the party chargeable shall prove to the satisfaction of the Commissioners for General Purposes in the district that such fines, or any part thereof, have been applied as productive capital on which a profit has arisen, or will arise, otherwise chargeable under this Act for the year in which the assessment shall be made, it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners to discharge the amount so applied from the profits liable to assessment under this Rule" shall be read as if the words "it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners to" were omitted, and instead thereof the words "the said Commissioners shall" were inserted.'"—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN was understood to say that the hon. Member was mistaken in supposing that the fines referred to were differently treated as compared with other kinds of income.

The exemption applied only to owners who treated the fines as capital, and, of course, the income from that capital then became subject to taxation.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) moved an Amendment providing that the annual value of any property which had been adopted for the purpose of income-tax under Schedule B in the Income Tax Act, 1853, "shall be assessed at one-fourth instead of one-third." He said that he raised the question nine years ago, and the then Chancellor of the Exchequer promised to look into the matter, but nothing practical had resulted. His object was to get the right hon. Gentleman to proceed upon the lines followed by the late Sir W. Harcourt and gradually to lighten the burden under Schedule A upon occupiers of land. It was a very small matter in one sense, as the total amount collected under Schedule B was, he believed, only £200,000. Very few farmers were able to keep such accounts as would satisfy a surveyor of taxes for assessment under Schedule D, as everyone conversant with farming operations knew that, although the valuation might appear to show a handsome profit, the farmer had very likely made no profit at all. The remission, though comparatively small, would, in the present state of agriculture, be extremely welcome to those affected by it, and the proposal might also be recommended on the ground that the income in question was income arising from personal exertion.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 7, after '1853,' to insert the words 'provided that the value under Schedule B shall be assessed at one-fourth instead of one-third.' "—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if they gave a reduction to all whose incomes were earned by their personal exertions they would afford that reduction to some of the richest men in this country. He doubted whether the Committee would be prepared to give this reduction in respect of one class of persons whose incomes were earned by their personal exertions without extending it to other classes. If the hon. Member desired to make a case for the Amendment it must be on the ground that at the present time farmers were paying more than their due share of the tax. Having regard to the capital invested by the farmer it could not be said that his profits were over-assessed, and no case had been made out for relieving him at the expense of those to whom the alteration of assessment would not apply.

Question put, and negatived.

Question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT (1887) REPEAL BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 24th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

NEW WRIT.

For the County of Sussex (South Western or Chichester Division), in the room of Edmund Bernard Talbot, commonly called Lord Edmund Talbot, Commissioner for executing the Office of Treasurer of the Exchequer of Great Britain and Lord High Treasurer of Ireland.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Central London Railway Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).

Mr. de TATTON EGERTON reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That a communication had been received from Mr. Arkwright, one of the members of the said Committee, that he was unable, on account of domestic anxiety, to attend the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Great Central Railway Bill [Lords]. Report [23rd May] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Fearn, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

FALSE STATEMENTS (COMPANIES) BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Cullicudden, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SHESKH, SULTAN.

Petition of Sultan Sheskh, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

STREET BETTING BILL.

Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Copy presented, of Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF DURHAM).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of Durham, altering certain Polling Districts in the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITIA (SERVICE OUTSIDE UNITED KINGDOM).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 19th May; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Arundel Port. Copy of Annual Report and General Account of the Commissioners of Arundel Port for period from 25th March, 1904, to 25th March, 1905 [by Act].

2. Temporary Laws. Register of Temporary Laws for the Sixth Session, Twenty-seventh Parliament, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, pursuant to Report of the Select Committee on Expiring Laws in Session 1866; to be printed. [No. 171.]

CONSTABULARY FORCE FUND (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing Amounts received into and paid out of the Constabulary Force Fund during the period from the 1st day of April, 1887, to the 31st day of March, 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 286, of Session 1887)."—(*Mr. Sloan.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Board of Education and the Registration of Teachers in Technical Institutes.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if the Board or the Consultative Committee is at present considering the question of registration of teachers in technical institutes; and, if so, will the Board, before coming to a decision on the matter, acquaint the association of such teachers of the proposals or the terms of the draft scheme.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The matter is at present under the consideration of the Consultative Committee; until the Report of the Committee is before the Board it would not be possible for me to state what course the Board will follow as to communications to persons who may be interested in the subject of the Report.

Publication of Report of Lord Mansfield's Commission.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state when the Report of Lord Mansfield's Commission will be laid upon the Table of the House, and the cause of the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Secretary for Scotland is informed that the Report will be sent to him on a very early day, and will, in due course, be laid upon the Table of the House.

Post-Mortems in South West London and City of Westminster.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the coroner for South West London and City of Westminster is in the habit of employing a pathologist to determine the cause of death, in preference to the medical practitioner last in attendance on the deceased; and will he state why the practice adopted by other coroners throughout the country is departed from by the coroner for this district.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have had under my notice certain statements made with regard to the procedure at inquests held by the coroner in question, but I do not know how far these statements are accurate; and, in any case, I have no authority to interfere with the discretion of a coroner in the conduct of inquests.

Number of Aliens Naturalised from 1890-1904.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of aliens naturalised in each of the years 1890 to (and inclusive of) 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The number of persons whose oaths of allegiance, taken on the grant of Certificates of Naturalisation in the United Kingdom, have been registered from 1894 to 1904, are as follows:—

Year.	No. of persons naturalised.
1894 1895 - - - -	910
1896 - - - -	736
1897 - - - -	606
1898 - - - -	634
1899 - - - -	608
1900 - - - -	581
1901 - - - -	542
1902 - - - -	788
1903 - - - -	890
1904 - - - -	974

The figures for previous years were not kept in a similar form, and are not readily available for purposes of comparison. They included the few cases in which persons have been naturalised by special Act of Parliament, but did not include those women and children who have become British subjects through the naturalisation of their husbands or parents.

Aliens Entering the Port of London Suffering from Infectious or Contagious Diseases.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state how many of the alien immigrants who arrived in London during March and April were reported by the Medical Officer of Health for the Port of London to be suffering from infectious or contagious diseases; and what were the diseases of the immigrants so reported.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am informed, on making inquiry of the authorities of the City of London, that the following cases of alien immigrants suffering from infectious or contagious diseases were reported by the Medical Officer of Health of the Port of London during March and April:—

March -	One case -	Erysipelas.
April -	Five cases -	1 Chicken pox. 1 Measles. 3 Enteric fever.

Relative Contributions to Imperial Exchequer of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the net contribution to Imperial Expenditure of England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, for the years 1895–6, 1899–1900, and 1903–4.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

Year.	Net Contributions as shown in the Financial Relations Returns.		
	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
	£	£	£
1895–6 - - - -	60,140,000	7,292,000	2,096,000
1899–1900 - - -	69,540,500	8,660,000	1,684,500
1903–4 - - - -	82,808,500	10,149,000	2,200,500

Payments by the Treasury to the Local Taxation Accounts.

MR. LAMBERT: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the total amount paid by the Treasury each year to the local authorities under the Agricultural Rates (England) Act, the Agricultural Rates (Scotland) Act, and the Tithe Rent Charge Act, and Local Government (Ireland) Act, respectively, for every year since the Acts were passed authorising such payment.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.)

Year.	Payments to Local Taxation Accounts.			Payments under Tithe Rent Charge (Rates) Act.
	England. (Agricultural Rates Acts.)	Scotland. (Agricultural Rates Acts and Local Taxation Account Act, 1898.)	Ireland. (Agricultural Grant under the Local Government Act.)	
	£	£	£	£
1896–1897 - -	665,517	91,509	74,871	—
1897–1898 - -	1,333,682	183,381	150,040	—
1898–1899 - -	1,333,433	231,902	438,851	—
1899–1900 - -	1,330,621	280,413	727,655	47,836
1900–1901 - -	1,327,268	280,126	727,655	105,687
1901–1902 - -	1,328,910	280,701	727,655	110,452
1902–1903 - -	1,327,981	280,413	727,655	119,290
1903–1904 - -	1,328,172	280,413	727,655	128,153
1904–1905 - -	1,326,627	280,413	727,655	135,716

Other grants besides the agricultural grant are made to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account under the Local Government Act. But I assume that the hon. Member's Question refers only to grants analogous to those under the Agricultural Rates Acts in Great Britain.

Caution to Local Secretary of Postmen's Federation at Faversham.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the local secretary of the Postmen's Federation at Faversham, Kent, has been cautioned because of his conduct in forwarding a petition regarding a matter in which he was not directly concerned; and whether such caution received his sanction, seeing that the application was forwarded in pursuance of his duty as representing his members, and by their instruction.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) Yes, the caution was given under my directions. The postman in question, as a town postman, was not concerned in the matter which formed the subject of the petitions from individual rural postmen, who were perfectly at liberty to present their petitions themselves.

Classification and Maximum of Provincial, Town, and Sub-Office Postmen.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is now in a position to announce his decision regarding the classification and maximum of provincial, town, and sub-office postmen.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) As the hon. Member is aware, the new scales of pay for provincial postmen were announced to the staff at the end of March last, and are already in force. I am daily receiving applications from the postmen at different offices for changes in the classification of their offices, and each case is being dealt with on its merits as quickly as possible.

Prosecution of Mr. Moynihan, of Kanturk, for Non-Payment of Income-Tax.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Mr. Moynihan, veterinary surgeon, Kanturk, county Cork, is now threatened with arrest for non-payment of income-tax; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that he is in receipt of only £50 a year from the county council and has no other professional income except from a few precarious cases, the income-tax authorities will abandon their intention of taking this course.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) If Mr. Moynihan will establish the fact that his total income does not exceed £160, the Crown's claim against him for income-tax will be discharged. But up to the present time, I understand, he has declined to offer any evidence on the point, and has ignored every communication made to him on the subject. As a consequence proceedings were entered upon for the recovery of the duty assessed upon him, and judgment has been obtained in the High Court for tax and costs. In these circumstances the Board of Inland Revenue cannot intervene on his behalf, unless he will place himself in communication with them, and put them in possession of the facts of his financial position.

Readjustment of the Chicory Duty.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he proposes to readjust the existing Excise Duty on chicory, to place the home grower on the same footing as the foreign producer.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I propose to deal with this subject in the Revenue Bill which I hope to introduce shortly.

Establishment of a College at Srinagar.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Maharaja of Kashmire has made representations to the Government of India with reference to the establishment of a college at Srinagar; whether the British Resident has refused to sanction this proposal; and, if so, whether he will state the grounds upon which the objections of the Resident are based.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Answer to the first two Questions is in the negative.

Aden Frontier Expedition - Grant of a Medal.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to grant a medal to the Aden Frontier Force.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) As I informed my hon. and gallant friend on February 22nd† last, it is not proposed to grant a medal to the Aden Hinterland Delimitation Commission escort, as the military authorities, who have again been consulted, do not recommend it.

British Indian trading in South Africa—Language Question.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether any protest has been received from or sent by the Government of India against the Bill now before the Cape Parliament which renders His Majesty's Indian subjects, resident in Cape Colony, liable to a trading disability which will not be inflicted upon Yiddish-speaking aliens; and whether the Government of India has protested against similar legislation in the Colony of Natal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Answer to the first paragraph of the Question is in the negative. The legislation of 1897 in Natal, which requires traders to keep their account books in the English language, formed the subject of protest by my predecessor when the measure was under consideration. It does not appear, however, to have interfered with the expansion of trade by Indians in that Colony. The law does not require the books to be written up by the trader himself.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 893

Promotion of Constable Adams, of Bray.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Constable Adams, now stationed at Bray, has been promoted to the rank of acting sergeant, and is about to be appointed to the charge of Newtownmount Kennedy Police Station; and will he say what is his length of service; how many unfavourable records he has, and was he ever cautioned because of infringement of the rules of the service, and informed that he would never get any advancement in the service because of the breach of such regulations; and were representations made to the commandant, and, if so, by whom, with a view to obtaining promotion for this man.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The constable has nineteen years service. He has never been informed that he would not receive advancement. The promotion was made by the Inspector-General, in the usual course, on the recommendation of the local officers.

Reasons for Repatriation of 332 Chinese Labourers.

MR. LEVY: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what were the offences in respect of which 332 Chinese labourers were repatriated up to December 31st last; what penalties, in addition to repatriation, were inflicted; whether all or any portion of the wages earned by such labourers was withheld or deducted; and whether such repatriated labourers were merely returned to the port of shipment, or if any means were afforded them of returning to their own homes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The great majority of labourers repatriated were probably returned as medically unfit, but I have no precise information beyond what has been published, and I will make inquiry. Meanwhile, reference may be made to the Ordinance (see pages 16 and 17 of Cd. 2026) and the Contract (see page 10 of Cd. 2183).

Discharges from Woolwich Arsenal and Enfield Small Arms Factory.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): To ask the Secretary of State for War the total number of workmen discharged from Woolwich Arsenal and Enfield Small Arms Factory since June, 1903, for causes other than misconduct.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The total number of workmen in the Ordnance Factories discharged on account of age, illness, or other causes except misconduct is as follows:—

From June, 1903, to May 6th, 1905—

Woolwich - -	2,363
Enfield - -	1,019

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Militia Subalterns.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, when the proposed changes in the organisation of the Militia shall have come into operation, subaltern officers of that force will have the opportunity of qualifying for all new conditions of service, so as to be able to continue serving under the new system, if duly qualified.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER Belfast, W.): In the event mentioned the claims of any duly qualified Militia subaltern officers will receive full consideration, and every encouragement and opportunity will be given to officers to continue their services.

Fatal Rifle Practice at Sheerness.

MR. TUFF (Rochester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the recent accidental shooting of a fisherman (George Thomas Gilson) by the Royal

Garrison Artillery off Sheerness; if so, what steps he proposes to take to prevent the possibility of such accidents in the future; and whether compensation will be made to the widow.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A report of this case has been forwarded to the War Office by the General Officer Commanding concerned, who stated that he had issued orders to give a longer safety range during practice with one inch aiming rifles. The question of the length of safety range which should in future be fixed for such practice will receive careful consideration. As regards compensation, the question of an award as an act of grace is being considered.

War Office and Rifle Clubs.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if rifle clubs are entered and numbered on the books of the War Office, and form an integral part of the scheme of national defence; and if, in view of the fact that the members pay for rifles, ammunition, watchers, and markers, it is intended during the coming season to charge them rent for the use of Government ranges.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Rifle clubs which are affiliated to the National Rifle Association are entered and numbered on the books of the War Office. They do not form an integral part of the scheme of national defence. A rent of 1s. a member per annum is charged in respect of the use of the ranges.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON: Were rifle clubs regarded as part of the system of national defence when the right hon. Gentleman promised a grant of £50,000 per annum in aid of them.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: They were not intended to form part of that organisation.

Chinese Labour Disturbance in the Van Ryn Mine.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what were the circumstances which led to the outbreak of Chinese labourers at the Van Ryn Mine in the Transvaal on 14th May; what casualties resulted; and how many persons have been arrested in connection with this disturbance.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have no information regarding the outbreak referred to, the facts as to which will no doubt be reported in due course.

The Afghan Treaty.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India a Question of which I have given him private notice, viz., whether the text of the treaty with Afghanistan, published in *The Times* this morning, is accurate, and when the official copy will be distributed to Members.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The text of the treaty, as published in *The Times*, is, as far as I know, substantially accurate. The distribution of copies will take place in the course of the next two or three hours. The Paper was laid on the Table last night, and was, therefore, accessible to Members in the Vote Office. But no copy was sent to any newspaper.

Cotton as Contraband of War.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been drawn to the decision of a Russian Naval Court in the case of the "Calchas," which appears to define cotton as being contraband of war; and whether, seeing that the proportion of cotton used for military purposes is quite insignificant and could be easily replaced for warlike purposes by some other vegetable fibre, and that cotton is largely used for clothing in this country and constitutes an important branch of manufacture, under these circumstances the "Calchas" decision will be allowed to pass without protest.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): His Majesty's Government have as yet only received a brief telegraphic summary of the decision. When the full text of the judgment is received they will consider whether any further action is desirable. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware, His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg has already brought the question of the treatment of raw cotton to the notice of the Russian Government in his note of October 9th last.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is seaweed which is used for manuring purposes also contraband of war?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Aliens Bill.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the names of the ports to which he proposes to apply the provisions of the Aliens Bill.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The present distribution of the wholesale immigrant traffic indicates that this machinery should in the first instance be set up at London, Grimsby, Hull. Newhaven, Southampton, the Tyne, Leith, and Harwich. In addition to these it will probably be required at Liverpool, and may perhaps be required at some other Western port, but as to this latter point I am not yet in a position to make any statement.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Are Dover and Folkestone to be excluded?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: It is not proposed in the first instance to set up special machinery at Dover and Folkestone. The Board of Trade Returns do not show that it is necessary there.

Adult Night Messengers in the Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the Tweedmouth Committee recommended that full time adult service in an unestablished capacity (other than that of learner) should be awarded good conduct stripes, he will consider the advisability of granting this privilege to adult night messengers on the same conditions as given to postmen.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. No such recommendation was made by the Tweedmouth Committee. As I stated in answer to a Question in this House on the 27th of July † last, I am not prepared to grant the privilege of good conduct stripes to adult night telegraph messengers.

MR. SLOAN: What is the object of refusing this small concession?

LORD STANLEY: I am afraid I cannot deal with that by means of Question and Answer in this House.

Government Departments and Free Postage.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that all communications in connection with rent-fixing are delivered post free to the Irish Land Commission, whilst similar communications addressed to the County Court must be postage paid and stamp enclosed if reply is required; and whether equal postal facilities will be provided in the County Court.

LORD STANLEY: The Irish Land Commission is a public office which is entitled by Treasury authority to send and receive letters on public business on which postage has not been prepaid. It would not be practicable to extend the same privilege to County Courts.

Swine Fever.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state, for the week ending May 13th, the number of cases of outbreak of swine fever in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxviii., 1337.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): During the week ended May 13th there were twenty-three outbreaks of swine fever in England, two in Scotland, two in Wales, and one in Ireland.

MR. FLAVIN: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman see his way, now that swine fever has practically ceased to exist in Ireland, to withdraw the removal orders now in force?

*MR. AILWYN FELLOWES was understood to reply that if the local authorities took certain action he would be prepared to consider the matter.

Sheep Scab in Scotland.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will postpone beyond 1st June the operation within the scheduled area in Scotland of the Sheep Scab (Regulation of Movement) Order until the local authorities within the area submit to him proposals which they believe will be effective for the prevention of the disease.

*MR. AILWYN FELLOWES: As will be seen from a communication which I sent to the Press yesterday, I have agreed, in response to the request of a deputation of Scottish flockmasters which waited on me on Saturday last, to postpone the operation of the Order in question until after the 30th of June, in order to allow time for the elaboration of a scheme to secure the compulsory dipping of all sheep within the scheduled area under conditions such as would justify me in contemplating the removal of the restrictions on the movement of sheep which are imposed by the Order referred to in the hon. Member's Question.

Voters' Disqualifications —Relief for Underfed School Children.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has considered the decisions given in the cases reported in Knapp and Omblus election cases, pages 114 and 320, and O'Malley and Hardcastles reports of decisions in election petitions, page 161, in all of which it was held that money given as a loan by the Poor Law authorities on the understanding that it be repaid was held not to be relief which disqualified a voter, and that in both cases the vote was allowed; and whether these decisions regulate the giving of relief to destitute school children when such relief is to be considered as a loan to the parent.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am aware of the cases to which the hon. Member refers. They do not relate to the question of the disqualification for being registered as voters of persons who have received relief on loan under the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, and I am advised that they would not apply to any such disqualification in cases arising under the Relief (School Children) Order, 1905.

The Unemployed.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the number of county boroughs in England and Wales in which unemployed bodies would be compulsorily established (unless exempted by an Order of the Local Government Board) by the Unemployed Bill now before the House, and the circumstances under which an exemption order would be granted.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The number of county boroughs in England and Wales is seventy-one. A local body would be established under the Bill for each of them unless in any particular case the Local Government Board postponed its establishment until the town council resolved that circumstances rendered the establishment of a local body desirable. Postponement could only be effected on the application of the town council, who would no doubt state the circumstances on which the application was based. It cannot be stated beforehand what the circumstances would be. They would presumably vary in different cases.

Reckless Motor-Car Driving.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for the Home Department whether, in view of the recent and continued loss of life through the recklessness of motor-car drivers, he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to place it within the discretion of magistrates to impose a term of imprisonment for a first offence.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The Motor-Car Act expires at the end of 1906, and I will take note of the suggestion of the hon. Member with a view to its consideration before that time.

The Price of Sugar.

Mr. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade to what extent has the price of sugar fallen during this year; what is the present price; what is the price now quoted for delivery during the last quarter of the present year; and what was the average price of sugar during the ten years prior to the signature of the Brussels Convention.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The price of 88 per cent. beet sugar f.o.b. Hamburg at the beginning of January was 14s. 10d. per cwt., and this had increased by the middle of January to 16s. The price on the 18th May was 11s. 7½d. The price quoted on the 18th May for delivery in November–December was 9s. 11d. The average price of the same sugar in the ten years 1892–1901 was about 10s. 9d. per cwt.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that since the Sugar Convention the retail price of sugar has doubled, and that the same sugar that was sold at 1¼d. a pound before the Convention is now sold to the same people by the same tradesman at 2½d. a pound?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I am not aware of it, and I would like to know if it is so.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that it is within my own knowledge that the fact is so at King's Lynn.

Parliamentary Buildings—Clock Tower Light.

Colonel WELBY: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he will consider the feasibility and cost of an apparatus to change the colour of the light on the Clock Tower as soon as a division is declared, the changed colour to remain until doors are unlocked, so as to inform Members approaching the House that a division is taking place.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The appliances needed to carry out my hon. and gallant friend's suggestion would be either very costly or difficult of manipulation. It does not appear to the First Commissioner that he would be warranted in adopting the proposal.

Colonel WELBY: Will the noble Lord consider as to placing a gong or bell in Parliament Yard. We have great difficulty in hearing when a division is called.

An HON. MEMBER: Would it not be better to fire off a gun?

[No Answer was returned.]

Unemployed Difficulty in Scotland.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that the City of Glasgow expended £12,000 during the past winter in finding work for the unemployed of the city: and whether, seeing that neither under the Poor Law of Scotland nor under the Municipal Acts has any public authority power to deal with or give relief to the able-bodied unemployed, and that the unemployed difficulty is becoming increasingly serious in Scotland, he proposes by the appointment of a special Committee or otherwise to inquire into the amendments required in the law to confer powers upon the local authorities for dealing with unemployment, as is proposed to be done for England and Wales in the Bill now before the House.

The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am aware of the facts referred to by the hon. Member in the first part of the Question. The whole matter is having the attention of the Secretary for Scotland, but I cannot at present make any definite statement as to the course which is to be taken.

Needlework in Irish Schools.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement on page 40 of Mr. Dale's Report, that the condition of the English Department of any grant being made to a school, that girls must be satisfactorily taught needlework, has not existed in Ireland, and that there are 780 schools, with a mixed attendance of boys and girls, under a master only, and that in these schools the infants are unsuitably taught, but the girls are necessarily deprived of all instruction in needlework or any other domestic subject; if so, can he say why the Commissioners, in their Annual Report which has recently been issued, offer no explanation in defence of the state of things which Mr. Dale's complaint exhibits as existing in these schools; whether they intend to permit the teaching by men only, not only of boys under eight years of age, but of infant girls and grown girls; and, if not, what steps they propose to take in the matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): The Commissioners allude, in their last Annual Report, to their desire for the extended employment of manual instructresses, who have been introduced into many small mixed schools with beneficial results. These instructresses might be employed in all the schools referred to in the Question. The rules provide that, in a mixed school under a master, an assistant mistress should be employed when the attendance warrants it, and that a manual instructress may be employed when the attendance is insufficient for an assistant mistress.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of publishing the observations of the Commissioners on Mr. Dale's Report?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I will communicate the hon. Member's wish to the Commissioners.

Irish School Management.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what number of the 780 schools, referred to in paragraph 133, page 40, of Mr. Dale's Report, are under Catholic, Episcopalian Protestant, and Presbyterian management respectively.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Three hundred and sixty-seven under Catholic management; 251 under Irish Church management; and 140 under Presbyterian management.

Land Purchase Agreements.

Mr. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Form P under The Land Purchase Act, 1903, is an agreement or undertaking between the tenant of a holding and the Estates Commissioners, and not an agreement between the tenant and his landlord; whether he is aware that landlords, agents, or their solicitors are using Form P and getting tenants to sign same and agree to purchase terms where the estate is to be sold to the Estates Commissioners, said agreement being signed by the tenant before the estate is offered for sale by the landlord to the Estates Commissioners; and whether he will take steps to secure that landlords, agents, or their solicitors shall not use Form P in such a way as to debar the tenants from any benefits which they otherwise might receive from a direct sale by the Estates Commissioners to the tenants.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. Form P is an undertaking by the tenant to the effect that, in the event of the sale of the estate to the Land Commission, he will purchase his holding from the Commissioners at the price named. This undertaking is entered into with a view to the sale of the estate to the Land Commission under Section 6, and is conditional on that sale being effected; and if the hon. Member will refer to Section 6 he will see that it would be almost impossible that the conditions in that section could be fulfilled unless some preliminary negotiations of this kind were entered into. I am not aware whether landlords or agents are acting in the manner mentioned, but as Form P is provided for a particular class of cases, the Estates Commissioners may be trusted not to permit it to be used in cases to which it is inapplicable, or to the prejudice of the rights of the tenants. It is not necessary to make any regulation dealing with the matter.

MR. FLAVIN: Do not the landlords who use this form get the tenants to agree to certain prices before the estate is offered to the Estates Commissioners?

MR. ATKINSON: Some preliminary negotiations are, of course, necessary to enable the Commissioners to do the things specified in the section.

MR. FLAVIN: But having got the tenant to sign the agreement, is it not the case that the landlord may proceed against him for the old rent?

MR. ATKINSON: The whole thing is conditional.

MR. FLAVIN: But the tenant has no protection against the landlord or his agent.

Glen Breakwater and Slip, County Kerry.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the toe of the slip at Boatcove, Glen, county Kerry, is still unfinished, and whether steps will be taken by the Congested Districts Board to complete this work without delay; and will the Board supply the hon. Member for South Kerry with a detailed specification of the proposed breakwater at the Glen, together with their estimated cost of erection.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Board have expended £361 on this boat slip, and they are doubtful whether the small advantage to be gained by lengthening it would justify any additional expenditure. They will, however, have a further inspection made when opportunity offers. It was never the Board's intention to construct a breakwater at this place.

Illegal Trawling on the South-West Coast of Ireland.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any, and if so, what vessel is watching the observance of the fishing laws on the south-west coast; whether he is aware that several steam trawlers were near Ballinskelligs, within the prohibited limits, between 7th and 14th May, and that the local fishermen had to haul up their nets fearing they should be damaged by the trawls; and whether, seeing that two steamers are required for the adequate protection of local interests during the next two months, he will take steps to secure their constant supervision of the south-west coast.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Department's steam cruiser "Helga" patrolled the Kerry coast between the dates mentioned, but found no steam trawlers within prohibited limits. The supervision of the south-west coast will not be lost sight of, but for obvious reasons the position of the vessels engaged on the duty cannot be advertised beforehand.

Carland National School, Tyrone.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state on what grounds the National Commissioners have withdrawn the grant from Carland National School, county Tyrone; and whether, in view of the fact that there are eighty-six children on the roll and that there is no other school within two miles, the withdrawal of the grant from Carland School will be reconsidered.

MR. WALTER LONG: The manager of Carland School resigned, and proposed to transfer the pupils, of whom there were sixty-five on the rolls, to a new school in the locality. The Commissioners, having inquired into and considered the case, withdrew grants from Carland School, and refused aid to the proposed new school upon the ground that there was ample accommodation for the pupils in other schools under Protestant management within a reasonable distance. The Commissioners do not propose to reconsider their decision.

Mahon Ballydonlon Estate.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners received, on November 5th, 1904, a petition signed by several of the tenants on the Mahon Ballydonlon Estate requesting to be relieved of the untenanted land which they had got upon the estate; and whether it was replied to.

Mr. WALTER LONG: A petition was received on the 6th November, 1904, asking the Commissioners to fix an equitable price on the lands of Ballydonlon, or to refuse their sanction to the sale, but the petitioners were informed that the advances had been made in April, 1904, and that the proceedings were closed.

Mr. ROCHE: On whose authority did the right hon. Gentleman on a previous occasion say that no application had been received by the Commission?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have not that Answer before me or in my mind.

Mr. ROCHE: I have it here.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Did the right hon. Gentleman receive these two absolutely contradictory Answers from the same source?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I should not like to say they are contradictory until I have had an opportunity of examining them. The Commissioners have an enormous number of cases to deal with, and I have naturally to refer to them for information.

Street Betting Bill.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will give facilities for the passing of the Street Betting Bill this session.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. friend I have to say that I suppose his Question refers to the starring of private Members' Bills towards the end of the session. As the hon. Member knows, that is only done with Bills described as uncontroversial. I think it is too far from the end of the session to make any suggestion with regard to Bills which should or should not be starred, but from such information as I have received I think the Bill to which my hon. friend refers, and in which he is interested, is not likely to prove non-controversial.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair].

Clause 7:—

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said that it was not too much to say that this clause was the most important of the proposals which had been put before the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who proposed under this section—the omission of which he (the speaker) was advocating—that £10,000,000 of Exchequer bonds, maturing in December next, and created under the Supplementary War Loans Acts, 1900, should be paid off. In considering that, it was important to realise that this proposal dealt with the Unfunded Debt, and that it did not touch the Consol debt which they had under consideration the other day. The Unfunded Debt amounted on March 31st last to £71,600,000. Of that £20,500,000 consisted of Exchequer bonds, which was the nature of the debt they were now considering, and the balance of the total was made up of war stock to the extent of £30,000,000, and of Treasury short-dated Bills to the extent of £21,000,000. It was recognised, and, indeed, it had been so considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that this large floating debt was a standing menace to our financial position. Under this head, of course, came the borrowing under the Naval and Military Works Acts, and he proposed in only one sentence to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that under that head, in 1898, the gross outstanding liabilities amounted to £3,700,000, whereas at the end of the present financial year the total would be £47,600,000. That was one reason why they should be exceedingly cautious in any powers they gave to the Chancellor of the Exchequer over the creation of new debt, which was, after all, what he was seeking to do under this clause.

Another reason why they should consider this matter very carefully was to be found in the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not boldly faced the situation in regard to the national indebtedness, because last year, for the first time in our history, we increased our gross liabilities to the extent of about £2,250,000, instead of reducing them at the rate of some £7,000,000 a year. According to an Answer made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the preceding Monday the estimated reduction of the National Debt in the current year would only amount to a little over £3,000,000, so that it meant that for two years practically there would be no reduction whatever in the gross liabilities of the State. What did the Chancellor of the Exchequer propose to do under this Bill? He proposed to pay off £10,000,000 of Exchequer bonds. These bonds were created in 1900 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and £14,000,000 would mature in December next. It was this £14,000,000 with which the right hon. Gentleman was going to deal. He was going to pay off £4,000,000 of that with money obtained from the Transvaal and from the Sinking Fund, and this particular section dealt with the remaining £10,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman, in his Budget speech, said that it was a limited funding transaction. It was a very limited funding transaction when they considered that the proposal was to pay off £10,000,000 of debt by creating £9,000,000 of new debt, for that would be the result at the end of the financial year. He did not think that that could be considered in any way a brilliant financial operation. The intention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol when he created these Exchequer bonds was that they were to be of a temporary nature, and he made a statement to that effect in his Budget speech of the following year, when he said—

> "I have so arranged the borrowings hitherto sanctioned by Parliament that they will mature from time to time at such intervals that it will be easy for anyone having charge of the finances of this country, if the Transvaal is in a position to give good security for a loan, to enable it to pay a reasonable contribution towards the cost of the war, and to raise a loan to be devoted towards paying off such portions of our borrowings as may be possible."

That was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, and he thought it was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have dealt with the Transvaal contribution in that clause of the Finance Act. It was rather strange that while they forced the Chinese Labour Ordinance through the Legislative Council, they had delayed the Ordinance which was submitted to that Council for the purpose of raising this £30,000,000 loan, of which they were to obtain a contribution of £10,000,000 per annum for three years.

He would also like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what had become of the Chinese War Indemnity. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon distinctly promised that the contribution which they were to get from China in respect to the Chinese War Indemnity—estimated to amount to £6,000,000—would be applied to the reduction of the war debt. He understood that that indemnity had been transformed into an annual payment in the form of an annuity to this country, and that up to last year the payment had been devoted towards meeting the claims of private British citizens. Now, however, they would have a clear contribution, and he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intended to apply that, as promised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, to the reduction of the debt. If that were so they ought to have some provision made in that clause for giving effect to that payment.

He did not hesitate to say that these proposals of the Government showed a great lack of courage on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had had in the present year an unique opportunity for dealing with the national indebtedness. He could have dealt with the terminable annuities which matured next year, and he ought to have dealt with the contribution from the Transvaal. He would like to point out to the Committee what he did not think had been quite realised—namely, that the gross national liability amounted to close upon £800,000,000 sterling, exactly the amount at which our debt stood in 1867 after we had discharged the new debt created on account of the Crimean War. Yet to-day they had the Chancellor of the Exchequer under this section proposing to raise another £10,000,000 of debt. That was really what it came to, because these bonds were created only for a term of five years, and now, instead of renewing them for another term of five years, the right hon. Gentleman was proposing to renew them for a term of ten years, with an annual reduction of £1,000,000 sterling which would have equally applied had he added that as contribution to the Sinking Fund. In addition to that, he had led them into this peculiar position, that they were adopting a lottery system of annual drawings, which was entirely foreign to British finance. He did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could say that this proposal had given him any advantage at all from a financial standpoint. He had had to borrow at a high rate of interest. It had not reduced the rate of interest; it had not really enticed the market to come forward to take up these bonds, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman could not fail to realise that it would have been better to have renewed these bonds, and to have applied a £1,000,000 increase to the Sinking Fund. For these reasons he begged to move that the sub-section be omitted.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 19, to leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the word 'ten,' in line 22, stand part of the clause."

*COLONEL WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.) said the hon. Member had crowded a good many curious theories into his speech, some of which he would find it hard to justify when he was sitting behind a Chancellor of the Exchequer of his own side. In his opinion the course adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to this £10,000,000 was a bold and not a craven course. If there had been an innovation it was one which he was rather glad to see, because the right hon. Gentleman had established a new form of Sinking Fund. It was not in any way a lottery as the hon. Member opposite chose to call it, but instead of burdening the Chancellor of the Exchequer in future years with the repayment of £10,000,000 at one time, the right hon. Gentleman had increased the service of the Debt from £27,000,000 to £28,000,000 permanently, and had allotted £1,000,000 of that to paying off one of the £10,000,000 every year, with the result that the Chancellor of the Exchequer who happened to be in office when the operation was completed would find himself with a fixed debt-charge of £28,000,000 instead of £27,000,000 to deal with, and the £1,000,000 allocated for a limited period would be freed for the reduction of the Funded Debt. The hon. Member had spoken as if the paying off of £1,000,000 a year would effectually bar the Chancellor of the Exchequer from using the Transvaal war contribution—whenever it was received—for the reduction of debt. There were more millions of Unfunded Debt to be dealt with, and many ways in which the Transvaal contribution could be applied to the reduction of debt. He was astonished to hear the hon. Member blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer for not dealing with the terminable annuities which fell in next year. Surely one of the things most to the credit of the right hon. Gentleman was that he had resisted the temptation to do so, and that he had realised that sound finance required the finance of the year to be dealt with by the resources of the year. He hoped the Committee would not be led away by the contradictory arguments of the hon. Member, and that they would reject his Motion by a considerable majority, thus showing that they were grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having had the boldness to initiate a new form of paying off the Debt.

*MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton) was sorry that the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had met with the approval of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, especially after the way in which this issue of Exchequer bonds had been received in the market. It had proved a costly experiment to the Exchequer. He agreed with his hon. friend that apart from the war debt the floating debt of the country was far too large. It was perfectly true that £30,000,000 of it ought not to be considered as floating debt, seeing that it was a war loan, but the fact remained that the floating debt was something like £45,000,000, whereas a few years ago it was but a tenth of that amount. The fact was that Treasury bills, which used to be employed merely as a means of tiding over the lean periods of the year, were now being used in place of Funded Debt because of the difficulty of raising that debt. During the war they were obliged to raise a very large amount by Treasury bills, and that was a legitimate thing to do, but big houses still carried such a large amount of the Funded Debt that it was almost impossible now to market Consols in the City of London at anything like a reasonable price. But when the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that by issuing this form of debt he was reducing the floating debt of the country he failed to see how he was doing it. On the contrary, it appeared to him that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this case was merely creating a new and very objectionable form of debt. It would have been far better to have added this £10,000,000 to some existing form of debt than to have created a new form which was less marketable in the City.

The hon. and gallant Member opposite objected to the phrase lottery loan. That phrase was very rightly used of the transaction by the hon. Member for King's Lynn the other day. It was obviously nothing but a lottery loan, and it was not a very dignified position for the Chancellor of the Exchequer of this country to take up to issue a form of loan of the kind. It might be very well for a third-rate South American Republic, but it was certainly not the kind of debt which ought to be undertaken by a great country with a credit such as we possessed. A lottery loan was a very expensive article; it was not suitable for City purposes, neither was it suitable for the permanent investor, who wanted to know definitely what rate of interest he would receive and when he would be repaid. Then with regard to the City of London, bankers, insurance companies, bill brokers, and discounters were those who chiefly took up Exchequer bonds. Did the Chancellor of the Exchequer imagine for one moment that they liked this gambling transaction? No, they too preferred to know the exact rate of interest and the exact currency of the obligation. When they knew where they stood they were willing to pay the best market prices for an article when guaranteed by the Government, but when uncertainty prevailed as to the time of repayment they were not likely to run the risk for the same amount of money. The result had been that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had to pay 3⅛ per cent., whereas he might have got the money on Exchequer bonds at 2⅞ per cent.—a very considerable difference indeed. That was not what he called wise finance, and he hoped that in case of future necessity the right hon. Gentleman would profit by the experience of the past and not seek to raise money in so expensive a way or in a manner incompatible with the dignity of a great country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) replying first to the Question of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh as to the Chinese war indemnity and the Transvaal war contribution, said that the earlier receipts in connection with the Chinese indemnity had been wholly devoted to the payment of private claims, delay in which might involve great hardship to individuals. He hoped a point had now been reached when some satisfaction would be received year by year on account of the Government claim. The exact amount of the claim was still the subject of diplomatic negotiation, and he did not think he could make definite proposals to the House until those negotiations had come to a conclusion. But he would say at once in the most positive form, in order to remove the anxiety of the hon. Member, that, in his opinion, whatever we might recover on that account ought undoubtedly to be devoted to the reduction of the Debt, and it was to that purpose that, so long as he was responsible, he would take care that it was applied. If anything was received on that account before he was able to explain the situation in full to the House and make definite proposals on the subject, the money would be held on suspense account until it could be applied to the reduction of the Debt. There need be no apprehension that he would be tempted to apply that money in relief of taxation or payment of the ordinary current expenses of the year. The money ought, undoubtedly, to be applied to the reduction of the Debt

*MR. McCRAE: Am I right in assuming that during the last two or three years we have received £300,000 a year, that that has been applied to the satisfaction of British claims, and that they have now all been met.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was speaking from memory, but he thought that until very recently the whole of what we had received had been devoted to the satisfaction of private claims. He believed there was at this moment a sum of money in our hands which had not been required for the satisfaction of those private claims but he also believed that the whole of the private claims had not yet been satisfied. The claims of individuals had been satisfied, but there were railway claims outstanding to which the same conditions did not necessarily apply as applied to the individual claims. By the former he meant the cases in which hardship would be caused to individuals if they did not receive their money at once. Probably the railway need not receive the full satisfaction of their claims at once, but might share with the British Government in the payments that now became due. At any rate, whatever money now accrued to the British Government would go to the reduction of the Debt.

As regarded the Transvaal war contribution he had already explained in his Budget Speech the position of the Government, and he thought it would serve no useful purpose to go over the ground again. He agreed with the opinion to which expression had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, that further discussion of the matter at the present stage was not likely to be conducive to the public advantage, or to facilitate the recovery of the contribution.

The hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh had accused him of great lack of courage in dealing with the Debt, and of failing to take advantage of a great opportunity. A number of terminable annuities would fall in next year, and he understood that the contention of the hon. Gentleman was that he ought to have anticipated the falling-in of those annuities, and this year set up fresh annuities to cancel a further amount of debt. He was at a loss to conceive why the hon. Gentleman considered that that would have been a more courageous course than he had actually followed. If he had proposed to reduce the Sinking Fund or the amount of money available for the reduction of debt, he could have understood the charge of lack of courage, but he had taken exactly the opposite course. The operation which he was blamed for not undertaking was a purely paper transaction, which would not in fact reduce by one penny more than his own proposals the liabilities of this country or the amount of its debt. He had not thought it any part of his duty to anticipate what the Chancellor of the Exchequer might think fit to do next year. What he did think was a part of his duty—a duty which he had attempted to discharge—was to strengthen the provision made for the reduction of the Debt, but he did not think it would be wise to prejudge the decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer next year as to whether the amount we had available for that purpose should be applied in one particular way rather than another. What it was expedient to do in a matter of this kind must depend on the circumstances existing at the time the operation had to be performed. He thought hon. Members were occasionally misled by the opinion that there was some peculiar sanctity about terminable annuities of this kind, and that a sinking fund wrapped up in terminable annuities was protected against interference or raiding by the House of Commons or the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a way that no other sinking fund was. They did not, in fact, afford any additional security. That view was confirmed by the fact that during the recent war in South Africa the House consented to suspend the whole of the Sinking Fund.

*MR. McCRAE said it was only that part which was held by Government Departments.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he thought the hon. Gentleman was in some confusion of mind. Life annuities, granted to individuals, constituted a contract between the State and the individual which could not be interfered with. But those were not the annuities about which the hon. Gentleman was talking. They were not affected in any way by the proposals which the hon. Gentleman brought before the Committee; of course the free operation of the Sinking Fund was really their first reserve. As to the allegation that he was not reducing the Debt at all, but, on the contrary, increasing it, if he reborrowed the same amount of money to pay off an old loan he did not increase the Debt, though if that were the whole operation he would not diminish it. But that was not the whole operation, and he had taken steps to diminish the Debt. The hon. Gentleman did not approve of the steps he had taken, and said that it would have been much better if he had renewed the bonds for five years. He had power to do that under the Exchequer Act, which gave power to raise money by Exchequer bonds not merely for the purposes of the Act, but for paying off sums raised under that Act. But the War Stock bonds stood on a different footing to these Exchequer bonds, although these Exchequer bonds were raised for the purpose of the war. The phraseology was necessarily confusing, and it was difficult to make his point clear, especially when hon. Members seized that particular opportunity to raise points which really were not germane to the particular matter under consideration.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) (who had interjected the remark which elicited these observations) said he thought that according to the letter of the Act the right hon. Gentleman was justified in the statement he had made, but he doubted whether that was the spirit of the Act.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that as a general rule they had to interpret Acts of Parliament according to the letter. If they allowed themselves to interpret the spirit according to their own inclinations, probably the hon. Member and he would differ materially as to the spirit of some Acts of Parliament. The law gave the Treasury power to reborrow *ad infinitum* for the purpose of paying off debt. Having once raised money on Exchequer bonds, as soon as they fell due the Treasury could borrow the same amount again and could continue the operation to the end of time. It was indeed a complete circle which need never be broken. But it was quite clear it was not a desirable course, and it was not the intention of his right hon. friend when he passed that Act, for he hoped to be in a position by the time the bonds fell due to clear off the whole. He, however, was not in a position himself to do that, but he thought he ought to make provision to clear the bonds in a fixed and limited period and by a regular systematic process. That was really the main object which influenced him in pursuing the course he recommended to the House, and in making him select the form of security he did. There was obvious inconvenience in having so large a sum as £14,000,000 falling due on a single day unless he had reason to anticipate that about that time he would have a similar amount available for its extinction. To meet such a liability it would be necessary to accumulate money in advance, and while it was so accumulating the interest on it would be lost; or, having failed to accumulate the money in advance, it would be necessary on the day it fell due to go to the market and raise the whole sum. He need not remind hon. Members that the month of December was not usually a particularly favourable moment to go to the market for a loan. He had therefore to make arrangements in advance. As regarded £4,000,000 of the debt outstanding, he hoped to be in a position to extinguish that altogether, and as regarded the other £10,000,000 he was obliged to provide for its renewal, but he made that provision subject to the repayment of the debt by regular annual instalments within a period of ten years.

The hon. Gentleman who spoke last, with great vehemence and almost passion, denounced the step he had taken as having some immoral taint about it, that it was a pure lottery unpopular with investors and with persons in the City of London, and quite unworthy of the British Government. He could only say that the British Government had not thought it unworthy of itself to issue loans with similar provisions, and the House of Commons had not thought it unworthy of the dignity of the country to sanction those loans, and had provided that in regard to municipal enterprise in certain cases exactly similar arrangements could be made.

*MR. ASHTON: Were these other bonds issued at par? They are not lottery bonds if issued at par.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said they were not lottery bonds whatever price they were issued at. The Egyptian Loan was not issued at par. Surely it was a gross abuse of language to describe these bonds as lottery bonds, and to suggest that investment in them was only a gambling transaction. It was no more so than an investment in Consols. What was the alternative step? If he had made a fresh issue of Consols he would have had to issue them very much below par, and he would have further depressed Consols. Houses that tendered for these Exchequer bonds had to take account of the liability of the bonds to be drawn at the rate of one-tenth each year. They had to average their tender on the assumption that the average life of a bond would be five years. It was a very simple calculation, and was in no sense a gambling transaction; and it was absurd to suggest that there was anything likely to corrupt the morals of the City or the large financial houses in Paris which dealt with millions on the same principle, or that there was anything derogatory to the dignity of the country in issuing bonds of this nature. He had been told he was not reducing the Debt by this operation at all.

*MR. ASHTON: The floating debt.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am paying off £4,000,000, at any rate.

*MR. ASHTON: I was only referring to the £10,000,000.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was reducing the £10,000,000 by £1,000,000 a year instead of allowing it to go on for ever. The only question relevant to the present issue was whether he had or had not complied with statutory requirements. He was not concerned at that moment to defend the policy which Parliament had laid down in the Naval and Military Works Acts. The only question that could be relevant to the present issue was whether he had or had not complied with the statutory requirements of Parliament. His views on the matter were well known to the Committee, for he had explained them on more than one occasion. The whole matter had been carefully considered by the House on the Military and Naval Works Acts. It was obviously impossible, and he believed it would be out of order, to discuss the policy embodied in these Acts, or the actual expenditure provided in them on an occasion like the present. He thought he had said enough to meet the charges which the two hon. Gentlemen had levelled against him. The proposal he had made was one which met the necessities confronting them in such a way as to secure a considerable immediate reduction of the floating debt which had been inherited from the war. It secured, in addition, a regular diminution of the floating debt year by year until another £10,000,000 of it was extinguished. At the same time it did not draw on the resources which had hitherto been devoted to the payment of the Debt. The Sinking Fund had been specially increased in order to make provision for that debt. The proposal had met on the whole with favour in this Committee when he first expounded it, and he believed it had met with approval elsewhere. When it was realised that in taking this step the Government were recognising an obligation which was incumbent upon them, it would be felt that they had chosen the best means of providing for its fulfilment.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said he wished to say a word or two on the question of the South African contribution. It would have been unnecessary for him to make any remarks on the point at all had it not been for the circumstance that on his side of the House opinions had been expressed on the Transvaal loan which he utterly objected to.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) rose to order, and asked whether it would be more for the convenience of the House that the question of the Transvaal contribution should be discussed on the clause.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It would be more convenient for the Committee that the discussion should take place on the clause.

MR. CAWLEY said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the question.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That was a passing comment, and I did not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. CAWLEY said he would refer to the question when the clause came before the Committee.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said he would state in a sentence why some hon. Members had called these lottery bonds. The essence of a lottery transaction was that those engaged in the transaction drew lots. What the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed was that the holders of these bonds should draw lots.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is done in transactions in this House.

MR. McKENNA said that was so, but no pecuniary advantage was given in that way. The essence of this proposal was that pecuniary advantage was obtained by those who were lucky in the lottery.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That happens very often on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

MR. McKENNA: There is no pecuniary advantage. There is no law against lotteries where no prize is given.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is not a fiscal debate a prize?

MR. McKENNA: When the Prime Minister runs away! What happened in regard to these bonds was that certain bonds on being drawn were redeemed at par. The person who was first successful in the lottery, and whose bonds were redeemed, got a greater financial advantage than the person who was unsuccessful in the drawing, and so on each year in turn until the last of the bonds were drawn. If that did not constitute what was ordinarily understood by the word lottery, he failed to understand what a lottery meant. The term lottery as applied to these bonds was strictly accurate in letter and spirit.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said the hon. Gentleman was mistaken in saying that the holders of these bonds drew lots. The lots were drawn for them. The hon. Gentleman also said that there would be a gain to the holders by having the bonds drawn early. That would depend on the state of the market. If these bonds stood at 101 there would be a loss.

MR. McKENNA: It is equally a lottery.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said the system of drawing bonds was extremely common. It was practised by every Government in Europe and in all parts of the world. The only Government which had not hitherto practised it on its own particular stock was the British Government. But they had practised it upon the guaranteed loans in the shape of the Egyptian Loan and the Greek Loan. The only objection to this loan which he could see was that we should not get such a good price in the market because these bonds were not so popular. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to redeem this particular loan within ten years he would have been in an awkward position if he had adopted the other course, because he would have had to deal with it in a way which would have disturbed the money market.

*MR. McCRAE The hon. Baronet entirely forgets that we have £21,000,000 of Treasury bills which the Chancellor of the Exchequer can redeem. That would not upset the money market.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said that only made it worse, because the Government were continually borrowers or lenders in what was called the short-money market. The taking of £10,000,000 out was an advantage to the money market not only of London but of the world.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he took an entirely different view from the hon. Member as to the difficulties of a Chancellor of the Exchequer who had £1,000,000 at his disposal. The hon. Member seemed to think that the difficulties were insuperable. He could always buy Exchequer bonds.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY: What I said was that if this particular £1,000,000 had to be ear-marked for a special purpose it would be difficult to know how to employ it to advantage, and that it would be better to use it in the way proposed.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that supported his view. If the money was ear-marked it went to the purpose for which it was ear-marked. He believed he was the first to call these bonds lottery bonds. He did so for the simple reason that there was a direct element of chance in them. The objection to these lottery bonds was that they did not give the advantages of a lottery. The advantage of a lottery was that it appealed to everybody at large, to rich and poor, and especially the poor man in the street, but the appeal here was necessarily restricted. In the State lotteries abroad certain people who were successful at the drawings did get a great amount of profit out of the vicious propensities of their fellow-citizens. There was great need for meeting the Unfunded Debt, which was the worst form of debt we had at the present moment. He had worked it out and he found that the interest was about £3 5s. per cent. [AN HON. MEMBER: £3 4s. 4d.] It was an onerous debt, and it must seriously affect the money market. He gave the Chancellor of the Exchequer considerable credit for the effort he had made to deal with it. Reference had been made to the powers conferred by the Act of 1900. The Exchequer bonds authorised by that Act were really war bonds. They would not have been issued but for the war. He had carefully studied the Act and he was bound to say that by the strict interpretation of the Act the right hon. Gentleman was not unjustified in saying that these bonds should be paid off in 1915 and not in 1910. The net result of that was that the repayment of the debt was really extended for five years. Now, as he made out, the man who held these bonds which were to be paid off the first year, would receive interest at the rate of rather over 4 per cent., while the man who held bonds to be paid off in ten years would receive interest at a considerably less rate. The average interest, he understood, would be 3¼ or 3⅛ per cent. Well, that was a very high rate of interest to pay, because we were a 2¾ per cent. country at this moment, as was shown by the price of Consols.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that reference had been made as to whether these bonds were or were not lottery bonds. They might be classed as lottery bonds because one investor at one period got more interest than another investor at another period. The question whether they were issued at or below par made them more or less lottery bonds. He could say that as long as the present Government was in office the bonds would not go beyond par. The particular objection which he had to these bonds was, as the hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham, who was a recognised authority in regard to financial questions, had stated, that they were an unpopular form of investment. That was shown in a two-fold way. The application for them was very limited, and they were issued at a very heavy price to the Exchequer. As his hon. friend behind him had said, it could not be an advantage, having regard to the money market, to issue a new form or denomination of bonds. Already we had on the money market, in respect to the Unfunded Debt, far too many different denominations of stocks. Everybody knew that the larger the stock the easier it was to deal in it; and, therefore, the better the price obtained so far as the Government was concerned. Therefore, it could not be to the advantage of the Government, to the money market, or the credit of the country to issue a denomination of stock which was unpopular. There was another matter to which he attached considerable importance. He congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on having added £1,000,000 to the fund for the extinction of the Debt. But, in his opinion, it would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman had not tied his hands in the manner he had done in applying that £1,000,000 to the Sinking Fund instead of to the floating debt.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.) said that the hon. Member for King's Lynn was mistaken in believing that the interest on these bonds would amount to £3 5s. to £3 10s. per cent. It would not be more than £3 2s. Speaking as one who was very much in sympathy with all the observations which had been made as to the necessity for a speedy reduction of the Debt, he approved of the mode of repayment outlined in the Finance Bill because he believed it would secure the automatic action of the depletion of the Debt more than if the matter were in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer said that it was his wish to redeem the Debt as much as possible; but, for himself, he liked much better an arrangement which was concluded between the State and the bond-holder, and which removed the control from the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the redemption of the Debt. His hon. friend spoke of the Debt being increased by this five years arrangement. Certainly it would be increased. Nobody believed that these bonds were going to be paid off by the year 1910. They had had already experience of the disappointment of expectations of the repayment of debt. His hon. friend said that if Exchequer bonds, instead of these bonds, had been issued, they could have been issued on much lower terms; and in proof of that he quoted the Stock Exchange List of the previous day. That reminded him of the old saying that "If only I knew to-day what you will know to-morrow, how much richer both of us would be." He thought the hon. Member must perceive that his argument was misleading. In his opinion the arrangement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was an excellent one; and he liked it all the better because it was novel and would popularise this form of the repayment of the Debt.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY said that the question whether these bonds were lottery bonds was so obscure that it ought to be ignored. He himself, would have preferred that these bonds should have been issued for £20,000,000, to be redeemed by £2,000,000 each year, instead of £10,000,000 to be redeemed by £1,000,000 each year. He agreed also that the number of the different issues and the complicated way in which the Debt redemption was arranged was a great misfortune. It required many Questions, and the issue of many Papers, to get out the fact that this year the Debt had only been reduced by £3,000,000. Any one looking at the ordinary Returns would have been led to suppose that the amount of the Debt paid off was £10,000,000. He thought it was not creditable to this country that we were only paying off debt to the extent of £3,000,000 a year. He thought that the £10,000,000 a year, which most people thought we should pay, was the sum which ought to be paid. Most people who read the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought we were doing much more than we were, and he strongly urged that the House should take this matter in hand. In the interest of the Army, the Navy, the defence of the country, and of every other interest, financial and political, we should really pay off a much larger sum than this pittance of £3,000,000. In bygone days, when the country was not so rich, those responsible for the finances of the country made much greater efforts and the country was now deriving the benefit of them. It would be a sign of the degeneration, physical, mental, and moral of the present generation if, in the repayment of debt, we could not do something far greater than at present.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 205; Noes, 170. (Division List No. 177.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, RtHn. Gerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, RtHn J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt Hn Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Man'cr.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs.
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredrk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hon. S, F. Ormsby
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords. N.W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon. J. Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred

Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, Rt. Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Chas. J (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelen, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Ellice, Capt. E C (S. Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N

O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, Sir R. Threshie(Dumfries
Richards, Thomas (W Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer,Rt.Hn.C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Thomas,J A(Glamorgan,Gower
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred.W.(Norfolk,Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. M'Crae and Mr. Ashton.

*MR. McKENNA said he desired to move the two Amendments he had put upon the Paper in the form of one Amendment. He did not wish, in moving this Amendment, to go over the ground already covered on the Second Reading of the Bill at any length, he would merely recapitulate briefly the arguments then stated. Two years ago the fixed debt-charge was established at £27,000,000. At that time they argued that it should be £28,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might no doubt say that when he now proposed to put the fixed debt-charge at £28,000,000, hon. Members were not satisfied, but wanted it increased to £29,000,000, but the position had changed, and the £28,000,000 now were only as effective as the £27,000,000 two years ago. Every argument then used against the debt-charge being less than £28,000,000 was valid now against its being less than £29,000,000. Two years ago we thought to get £34,000,000 from the Transvaal, which was to be used in repayment of the Debt. £1,000,000 of that was to be obtained in the course of this year, and that was to be applied in reduction of the Debt. Of the remaining £33,000,000 we had received £3,000,000, which had not been used in reduction of debt, but to make up the deficiency of revenue in 1904. The remaining £30,000,000 we had not seen. Of the £34,000,000 anticipated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon in 1903, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was thus only able to use £1,000,000 this year for the purpose of the reduction of debt, and therefore we were £33,000,000 worse off than when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon fixed the debt-charge at £27,000,000. Had that £33,000,000 been received we should have been saved interest which we now had to pay to the extent of £920,000 a year, which was practically the equivalent of the £1,000,000 now proposed to be added by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, so that in fact the right hon. Gentleman was only making up the excess which we now had to pay beyond the amount anticipated by the right hon. Member for Croydon in 1903. To-day we had the same Sinking Fund available out of a fixed debt-charge of £28,000,000 as was anticipated by the right hon. Member for Croydon in 1903 would be obtained for a fixed debt-charge of £27,000,000, whilst the total amount of the Debt stood at £33,000,000 more than it would have done had the right hon. Gentleman's anticipations been realised. It was not enough for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say the total provision was now larger than it had ever been, nor was it sufficient to say the percentage was larger in proportion to the total debt.

There were other points to be taken into consideration, and those he wished shortly to bring before the Committee. First, there was the present price of Consols. Our credit stood too low. The high price of Consols was given in 1899 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that time as a reason for reducing the fixed debt-charge from £25,000,000 to £23,000,000. The reverse of the argument would apply to-day. With Consols standing at 90, it was our duty to make any reasonable sacrifice to raise the price to par. Power to borrow at a low rate was one of the best of national defences. For the purpose of renewing Treasury and Exchequer bonds the Chancellor of the Exchequer was every year the largest borrower in the market. In the course of the present year he would have to borrow at least £40,000,000, mainly for the purpose of renewing old debt. Last year the money was borrowed at an average rate of £3 4s. 4d. per cent., and the national credit standing at about the same level now as then, it was reasonable to assume that a similar rate of interest would obtain this year. Consols at their present price yielded to the investor £2 15s. 6d. per cent., but they were largely in the hands of holders who were not likely to come into the market; and consequently Consols were at a much higher level than would be indicated by the rate at which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could borrow on bills or bonds. What would be the effect if the right hon. Gentleman had to borrow a capital sum in Consols? At the very best he would have to borrow at the same rate as for bills or bonds, which would mean that the Consols would have to be raised not at 90, but at 80. That showed that by allowing the national credit to drop so low we were running a very grave risk in the event of war. Vast sums of money were spent every year during time of peace simply for the purpose of being ready for war. It was just as important for purposes of defence that the national credit should stand high, and he submitted that it would be well worth while to spend one or two millions more a year in buying Consols in the open market in order to force Consols at least up to par, so that the national credit might stand again on a 2½ per cent. basis. By paying £3 4s. 4d. instead of £2 10s. for interest there was a loss of 14s. per cent., representing £280,000 a year on the £40,000,000, which had to be borrowed, and this sum would be saved automatically if the necessary sacrifices were made to bring the Sinking Fund up to a proper level.

His second point was that we were not in fact paying off debt at all at the present time. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that during the current year debt would be paid off to the extent of £3,000,000. There was provided in the fixed debt-charge a sum of £8,400,000 for the purpose of the Sinking Fund, and £1,600,000 would be provided on the Votes, making £10,000,000, and the right hon. Gentleman had thrown in another £1,000,000 which was to be received from the Transvaal. Against this total of £11,000,000 there was new borrowing to the amount of £8,000,000, leaving a net reduction of debt of £3,000,000. But it was not paying off debt in the ordinary sense if assets were used for the purpose. The real amount by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to reduce debt this year was only £2,000,000 because the £1,000,000 from the Transvaal was an existing capital asset. So far from reducing debt since the war we had not been paying our way, with the result that three years after the war we should be actually £2,000,000 worse off than at the close of the war. That was not a satisfactory position for the country to be in. There were still over £14,000,000 to be borrowed on capital liabilities, so that for at least another two years the Chancellor of the Exchequer would go on borrowing, and it was not too much to say that at the close of 1908 debt would not have been reduced during the preceding five years by any appreciable sum at all. It had to be remembered that all the purposes for which money was now borrowed used to be satisfied out of revenue, and if the present system were continued it would ultimately mean that while an average amount of £7,000,000 a year was being borrowed, we should be repaying in interest and sinking fund on the total sum of such borrowings at least an equal amount. Thus the system would have to be brought to a close, but with what result to the taxpayer of the future? He would be saddled with interest and sinking fund on the borrowed money to the extent of not less than £3,000,000 a year, and he would have at the same time to meet out of revenue all those purposes for which money was now borrowed He submitted that that was a ground for a greater effort being made, so long as the borrowings in respect of capital liabilities continued, to increase the total amount of the Sinking Fund.

His third point was the inadequacy of the present Sinking Fund. In 1875–76, when the Debt stood at about the same figure as now, but the revenue was only half as large, Sir Stafford Northcote put the fixed debt-charge at £28,000,000. In the present year we were making a sacrifice of £2,000,000 for the reduction of debt. In Sir Stafford Northcote's time, with half the revenue, the sacrifice was £3,500,000, so that even if the Sinking Fund were extended by £1,000,000, as he proposed, the level of sacrifice attained by the taxpayers of 1875–76 would not have been reached. It had to be remembered that future wars would be vastly more expensive than past wars had been, and consequently if new debt had to be incurred for war purposes it would be in far larger amounts than hitherto. That meant that a comparison of the provision made for Sinking Fund in former years and the provision made to-day was not a useful comparison. Our resources for the repayment of interest and debt were far greater to-day than thirty years ago, and we ought to be willing to make greater sacrifices. This was not at all a Party question. Economists on both sides agreed that sufficient sacrifices were not being made at present, but their criticisms, valuable though they were, would never be effective unless they were backed by votes. He believed that in the present condition of the House of Commons, if hon. Members opposite who had spoken strongly on this question merely threatened to support their speeches by their votes they would get their way in the matter. Savings could admittedly be made this year on Army expenditure, and by such savings the provision for the reduction of debt could easily be increased by £1,000,000. He appealed to economists on both sides to insist that the Government should not be satisfied with a fixed debt-charge of £28,000,000 as now proposed. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 2, to leave out the word 'twenty-eight' and insert the words 'twenty-nine million pounds,' whereof one million pounds shall be paid by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in such manner, by such payments, and under such regulations as the Treasury direct, to the Commissioners of the National Debt out of the proceeds of the estate duty."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty-eight' stand part of the clause."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if he remembered rightly, at an earlier stage of the proceedings the Opposition, led by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench, instead of supporting the endeavour the Government were making to increase the Sinking Fund, went into the lobby against any increase of the fixed debt-charge. He need say very little about the Amendment itself, as probably the form in which it appeared on the Paper was dictated more by a desire to get round the rules of the House than by admiration of its exact wording. The two parts of the Amendment were inconsistent the one with the other. By Section 1 of the Sinking Fund Act, 1875, the permanent annual charge was directed to be charged to and issued out of the Consolidated Fund, and that would be inconsistent with the procedure commended in the second part of the Amendment, which also was open to the objection—and he was surprised that the hon. Member should be guilty of such fiscal heresy—that it attempted to intercept revenue before it reached the Exchequer. If the Amendment were put forward on its merits those observations would be sufficient, probably, in the estimation of the hon. Member himself, to dispose of it. The Amendment, however, was put forward not on its merits, but as a vehicle for the suggestion that the amount devoted to the reduction of debt in the present year was insufficient. The hon. Member had dealt once again with the Transvaal contribution, but he did not propose to follow him in that, and he regretted that there should be further discussion upon it at the present time, because it was understood that it should be dealt with on the Motion that the clause stand part of the Bill. ["No."] At any rate, at the present stage of the discussion he did not wish to add anything to what he had already said upon that subject.

It was said that it was a most urgent thing that they should make a larger contribution to the reduction of the National Debt, and one hon. Member had suggested that he should have used the whole of his surplus for that purpose. He thought an increased contribution for this purpose was eminently desirable and indeed urgent, but if they pressed this argument for a high Sinking Fund too far they might defeat the object they had in view, because they found it difficult to maintain steadily even at a reasonable amount. At a time when taxation was already so high he could only repeat that in his opinion he thought he had held the scales fairly between conflicting interests by devoting an additional £1,000,000 to this purpose during the current year.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said he agreed with the hon. Member for Monmouth that the strength of a nation depended not so much upon its warlike forces as upon its financial resource. He considered, therefore, that the position of this country had been considerably weakened by its present financial position as compared with its position five years ago. Our Debt was not only much larger than it ought to be; but larger than it was a year ago. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had adhered to all the taxation enforced a year ago he thought the Opposition would not have done unwisely if they had followed him into the lobby in support of retaining taxation in order that the Debt might have been by so much reduced. To show how important the financial resources of the nation were, he would instance the course of the war in the Far East, and the constant anxiety of the Japanese and Russian Governments, not so much to maintain the number and standard of their forces, but to borrow a sufficient amount of money at a low rate of interest. And it was the extraordinary and complete recovery of the financial position of France which enabled her to shake off the yoke imposed upon her by Germany and to resume her place among the foremost countries of the world. What had been instrumental in enabling us to take a foremost place in the councils of the world had been rather our extraordinary and superior command of money and all that money carried with it than our Army and Navy. It was those potential resources that had enabled this country to scramble through contest after contest with other Powers, because it had been fully realised by other nations that we could carry on hostilities longer than they owing to our financial resources. It seemed to him that, in spite of our unparalleled prosperity during the last ten years, we had wasted our resources on wrong objects, because we had had insufficient advice and because the control which the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to keep over other Departments of the State had been constantly relaxed. If this proposal were carried, and we devoted more money to paying off our liabilities than we had hitherto done, we should have what was much more valuable than a gold reserve, we should have our credit unimpaired, and, more than that, it would be vastly increased. It was in our credit that the strength of this country lay.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought he could show that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was under a misapprehension as to what was the Consolidated Fund. After the revolution of 1688, for 100 years every tax was allocated to a special purpose, and as a matter of fact there were in the Customs alone seventy-five taxes, each devoted to its own particular purpose. In 1787 they got rid of this system; the Consolidated Fund was instituted, and it was enacted that that should be the reservoir to which every public receipt should go and from which should flow every item of public expenditure. The Consolidated Fund had since then ceased to be entitled to its name through the practice of intercepting the moneys that belonged to it before they reached it. The hon. Member proposed to follow that example by his Amendment. What were the real merits of this matter? They had had the advantage of an object-lesson, showing the extreme facility with which, when once the matter was understood, any Member of the House could take hold of public money and apply it to any purpose he pleased. The hon. Member was the first who had done this. No Committee was required, no recommendation by a Minister of the Crown, and none of the ordinary financial securities which the House had placed around public money. Any Member at any moment might get up and move an intercepting Motion of this sort, applying the whole of the death duties to any purpose he chose in his wisdom to select. He would remind some of the hon. Gentlemen from Ireland who were occasionally inclined to apply public money to purposes which would benefit their country, that the hon. Member had taught a very great object-lesson. The hon. Member sought to intercept a million of money out of the estate duties and to add it to the permanent fixed charge for the National Debt.

That our Sinking Fund was too low, and that it ought to be higher, was a belief which nobody had affirmed with greater industry than himself. It appeared to be perfectly wanton that we should go on with a fixed National Debt charge only £28,000,000, the sum which Sir Stafford Northcote applied to a really smaller Debt, because we had not then the vast Unfunded Debt we had now. The sacrifice made by the community to get rid of the great burden of debt was greater when the Debt was smaller, and, therefore, he was a strong advocate for increasing the Sinking Fund. He reminded the Committee that the financial enemy of the Sinking Fund was the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There never was a Chancellor of the Exchequer who got into financial difficulty—and however short his tenure of office might be it was always long enough to get into financial difficulty—but he attacked the Sinking Fund. A Chancellor of the Exchequer was a brigand by nature. When he met the Sinking Fund in the wood he robbed it; this had happened time after time. It was a simple method of getting rid of his obligations. There was one method by which a proper Sinking Fund could be maintained in such a way that no Chancellor of the Exchequer could touch it. That method was to attach one source of revenue to the National Debt, say the estate duties. If the estate duties were affected to the National Debt—he did not mean to affect them alone, but in addition say, to another £16,000,000—that part of the Sinking Fund would never be touched, because, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer would always feel the same temptation to rob it, he would be deterred from it by the insuperable dislike which the Chancellor of the Exchequer always felt to taking off existing taxation. If the House were to affect the estates duties to the Debt they might have confidence that that source of the Sinking Fund would not be tampered with.

The reproach had been made that this Amendment was a wicked example of interception. Yes, but who showed the example? It had not been the unofficial Members, but the Government themselves. He had always strongly protested against it as a most improper thing to do. It had led to the falsification of the public accounts and the depletion of the Consolidated Fund, which was every year £20,000.000 poorer than it should be on account of the violations and partial repeals of the Exchequer and Audit Act of 1866, which prescribed that all the money should go into the Consolidated Fund. The hon. Member's Amendment was not out of order, and, after the strong advice he had himself given that the fixed National Debt charge should be increased, he felt bound to vote for the Amendment.

*MR. CAWLEY said the question whether we should get the £30,000,000 contribution from the Transvaal was important at the present time. Certain of his hon. friends had expressed the opinion that we should not get the money. An hon. friend wrote to a paper in which he said we had no right to claim the War contribution from the Transvaal, because we had conquered and annexed the country. It was, he said, the first time he had ever heard the South African War talked about as conquering and annexing. He always thought that we went there to relieve the so-called intolerable oppression from which our countrymen and others were suffering. We had relieved them from that oppression, we had given them cheap dynamite, cheaper railway fares, cheap and abundant labour, and he thought now was the time when they ought to perform their part of the bargain. Not only so, but we had in doing this reduced the cost of mining and extracting gold from the quartz lower than ever it was before, and thus greatly benefited the people of the Transvaal. For the gold mines were the Transvaal, and the Transvaal South Africa, therefore, in helping the mining industry we had helped everyone dependent upon it. For these reasons he thought the people of the Transvaal ought not and would not be guilty of the dishonourable evasion of a fair bargain and a just obligation. We had spent £230,000,000 on the war, and he thought it was the least they could do to make this small contribution to the heavily-burdened taxpayer of this country. Besides that, we had pledged our credit for the guaranteed loan of £35,000,000, which was at the time considered part and parcel of the bargain.

He supposed that quite half the shares in Transvaal mines were held by foreigners, and he could quite understand foreign shareholders in Germany and France and other places thinking they would rather have the £30,000,000 in their pockets than employ it in giving relief to the British taxpayer. But it was said that those people who arranged to pay the money were not at all representative, that they were merely a few people met together with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. That was a mistake. Rightly or wrongly, they were the people who organised the agitation which led to the petition that ultimately led to the war. They were looked upon as leaders by the people of the Transvaal, and it was with the sanction of the people of the Transvaal that those great leaders of the mining industry made those representations to this country. Now those very same people had a perfect right to pledge the credit of the Transvaal in the way they had done. To say that there was no debt of honour was a great mistake. He could not think that our kith and kin across the seas would, for a moment, try to wriggle out of this honourable undertaking given by their leaders.

The right hon. and learned Member for Dumfries, with whom on this question of the war he generally agreed, spoke of the enormous debt per head of the white population of the Transvaal. It was an enormous debt per head, but they had enormous resources. And at present kaffir and coolie labour was increasing in very much greater ratio than white labour. Therefore, the more kaffir and coolie labour increased, the richer would become the country, yet the debt per head would remain and possibly increase. There was nothing in the argument to take the debt per head, because they had to consider the enormous resources of the Transvaal. He did not believe the leaders in the Transvaal would try to get out of this debt, and therefore they ought to deprecate anything said in that House which would give them an excuse for thinking that they ought not to pay. If they thought that contribution too much, no doubt this country would be very glad to consider any reasons for reducing it. He would suggest, in order to make the burden as light as possible, that this country should guarantee a loan of £15,000,000. Of the ability of the Transvaal to pay there could be no doubt—in fact the profit accruing to the Government from the Premier Mine would be enough to pay the interest at 3 per cent. on a loan of £15,000,000. He said again that for the people of the Transvaal to attempt to wriggle out of their just obligation would be a dishonest and dishonourable course.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he had listened a short time ago to the pessimistic statement made by the hon. Member for Monmouthshire as to the decline in British securities. He did not think there was any reason for despairing about British securities. It was quite true that when we were borrowing huge sums of money to carry on the South African War, naturally British securities fell in the market. After the war was over they all thought that the securities of the British Government would recover, but that expectation had been disappointed. The reason was obvious. It was because the world, instead of settling down to industry and commerce, saw the outbreak of another great war between Russia and Japan. These countries were, in order to carry on the war, borrowing funds from the Western markets. Until that war was over it was unreasonable to expect any cheapness of money. After all, a 2½ per cent. security at 90 was just the same thing as a 3 per cent. security at 108. He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer could reasonably be called upon to increase the Sinking Fund more than he had done for the purpose of restoring British credit. British credit was very good at the present moment. Great Britain could borrow money as cheaply as any other country in the world. [AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: The United States.] It was said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have raised the Sinking Fund by more than £1,000,000, and that he ought to have put it in the same condition it was under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. He remembered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon would have raised the Sinking Fund to £28,000,000, but that he believed the Transvaal Government would repay very quickly the war contribution of £30,000,000. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer did not count on the repayment of that debt. He thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a very reasonable provision for the repayment of the National Debt, and that there was no fear of any decline in the credit of this country.

MR. DILLON said that the right hon. Gentleman opposite declared that the great fall in English securities was only the same as had occurred in regard to the securities of all other nations. That was not the case. While the credit of England had fallen, that of Italy had enormously increased, and the same was true of many other countries. There was no getting out of the fact that England had now to pay £3 2s. 6d. interest for a loan extending over ten years. He insisted that that was a tremendous fall in the credit of England. In spite of what the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other experts had said, English Consols had fallen to the very lowest point and showed no sign of recovery. That involved an enormous loss to this country and especially to Ireland. The sufficiency of the Sinking Fund was inextricably bound up with the question of the payment of the Transvaal indemnity; and what he complained of was that in all these recent discussions the House of Commons had been treated most unfairly. They could never get at the real facts of the situation. They had been told by successive Chancellors of the Exchequer that the Sinking Fund was to be increased as soon as peace was restored. But not a penny additional had been paid off the Debt. In 1903 the Debt of the country was £798,349,000 and the assets were £5,283,000. Therefore the net debt was £793,066,000. In the present year the Debt was £796,736,000. The realisable assets of the country had declined by over £3,000,000; so that the net Debt had increased by about £1,500,000 as compared with two years ago.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked if the hon. Member included the Suez Canal shares in his estimate.

MR. DILLON said he did not include the Suez Canal shares, because they were not to be sold. They were not in the sense liquid assets. The speeches of successive Chancellors of the Exchequer were most misleading in this respect. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer, being in a difficulty, annexed £1,000,000 of unclaimed dividends, of which there was no entry in the Return. That, in his opinion, vitiated the Return to that extent. The total net result was, although the figures were covered by complexity and confusion, that the country now owed £2,500,000 more than it did two years ago.

The question of the Transvaal contribution was another illustration of the unfairness with which the House of Commons was being treated. Two years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon delivered a most optimistic speech in introducing his Budget. He indicated that the Debt would vanish away like a morning's mist before the sun. The right hon. Gentleman then said that before deciding what the annual debt-charge should be, the Committee should consider the arrangement entered into by his right hon. friend the then Secretary for the Colonies, under which £4,000,000 was to be obtained from the Transvaal immediately, and, in the course of the succeeding three years, a sum of £30,000,000 towards the expenses of the war. The right hon. Gentleman accordingly fixed the annual debt-charge at £27,000,000. However, not a penny had been received from the Transvaal; and there was now a worse prospect of getting anything than there was three years ago.

The whole financial structure of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was based on the assumption of the receipt of £30,000,000 from the Transvaal. He calculated that on March 31st, 1908, the Debt would be reduced to £694,000,000; and that the Sinking Fund would be £8,841,000, or 1·25 per cent of the Debt. Now they were half way to the stated time and instead of the Debt being reduced it had been increased by £2,500,000. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the whole of this gigantic Debt would be wiped out in fifty years. Yet the Debt was increasing at the rate of £1,000,000 a year. After the previous great war Sir Stafford Northcote fixed the annual debt-charge at £28,000,000, although the Debt was then £30,000,000 less than at present. That charge was maintained until the Debt was reduced by £100,000,000. During the recent war £159,000,000 had been added to the Debt, and the country did not make even the most ordinary effort to repay a war debt in time of peace. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol was Chancellor of the Exchequer he said he proposed to raise the war expenditure by means of bonds, not by an addition to the Debt. The latter, he added, would only be justified in the case of war with a first-class Power. That had reference to the character of the Power.

Sir M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): And the cost of the war.

Mr. DILLON said that the condition was war with a first-class Power; and no one would contend that the Transvaal was that. The right hon. Gentleman further stated that he hoped the war debt would be paid off in two years or sooner. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman was then only contemplating an expenditure of £10,000,000. There was an obligation on the part of the country to discharge this war taxation. The House of Commons had not been treated fairly in the matter. Was it not better to face the matter and deal with it honestly instead of being led on like a pack of fools by Chancellor of the Exchequer after Chancellor of the Exchequer telling them that they were going to get the money shortly? They were not going to get the money, but they were going to give General Botha and the Responsible Government Association, largely composed of Englishmen, the most popular cry they could possibly have. They were going to lose this money, but not by generosity, not by doing frankly and handsomely what they would have to do in the end meanly and contemptibly, and they were going to set up an agitation in the Transvaal in which they would have every man in South Africa against them. The mineowners would not mind. They had got all they wanted—their £35,000,000, their cheap dynamite, and their Chinamen. They would take a back seat now. He protested against the House of Commons being "hung up" and deluded. It was a shame for responsible Ministers to delude the country by building up the financial system of the Budget on the assumption that they would ever get a shilling of the money.

Mr. RITCHIE (Croydon) said he was sorry to have to trouble the Committee again with a defence of his action, because he had already explained it more than once very fully. The remarks just made by the hon. Gentleman with regard to the payment of this contribution from the Transvaal were not at all likely to improve our prospects of obtaining that which was undoubtedly due. When he thought of the amount arranged as that contribution he regarded it as a tribute to the great moderation of this country. One would almost imagine that the hon. Member held a brief for repudiation. Not only the words he uttered, but the tone in which he uttered them, constituted a direct incitement to those who desired to repudiate obligations properly undertaken.

Mr. DILLON said he was only following the example of the *Morning Post.*

Mr. RITCHIE thought the hon. Member preceded the *Morning Post.* He remembered a speech made by the hon. Gentleman much on the same lines many weeks ago. Coming to the complaint made against him for his optimism in assuming, when framing his Budget, that this contribution would be received, what was the financial position at that time? The country had been groaning under extraordinarily heavy burdens of taxation for some years, and all classes of the community were suffering in consequence. Trade was depressed, and he was naturally anxious to moderate these burdens. When he had to decide what amount of Sinking Fund he was prepared to recommend to the House, was he, in his natural and proper survey of the money likely to come in not only in that year but in the succeeding year, to leave out of account the arrangement for the payment of £30,000,000 from the Transvaal? It must be remembered that he had before him not only the views which the Colonial Office held on the subject, but views which had been arrived at after careful consideration on the spot by the right hon. Gentleman the then Colonial Secretary, and all information which was in the possession of the Colonial Office. He had to take that into account. Not only that. It was his duty to study carefully for himself all the bases on which the right hon. Gentleman had rested the belief that this money would be received. Having done so, he came to the conclusion, independently of the right hon. Gentleman, that they had a perfect right to expect that the money would be received in due time. So far as the first payment was concerned, the subscription of the first £10,000,000 was practically guaranteed by those most able to give that guarantee in the Transvaal. He had every reason to expect from the financial statement of the resources of the Transvaal sent to him by Lord Milner that the revenue of the Transvaal would be such during the next three years as would amply provide for all the cost of administration in the Transvaal as well as for the interest of the debt which would be created for the contribution. But, of course, as every one knew, the view then taken, both by himself and others and all who had studied the matter, was too optimistic. He did not pretend to be a prophet at all. He judged from the material at his hand at the time; and he came to the conclusion that when he had to settle the burden to be put on the taxpayers of this country he not only had the right, but it was his bounden duty, to consider that during the three years, including the one in which he was speaking, there was every reason to believe in the receipt of £10,000,000 a year from the Transvaal. He arranged his Budget accordingly, and everything quoted from his speech would have been fully justified had the contribution been paid. It would have been true that the amount of the Sinking Fund would have been greater than any percentage of previous times. It turned out that the rosy views of the prospects of the Transvaal, of its revenue and its progress, were not justified.

Earlier in the afternoon it had been asked why payment of the first £10,000,000 was not insisted on. The reason was perfectly obvious. It was true that there was a guarantee from the mineowners, but what the Government had to consider was not the question of taking up the £10,000,000. About that there was no doubt at all. What they had to consider was the possibility of the Transvaal being in a position to find the interest on the debt. They had to consider whether they should exercise the power of compelling the Transvaal, whose conditions were, of course, extremely grave, to issue a loan when the finance of the country showed it was quite impossible that the interest on the loan could be paid along with the other charges necessary for carrying on the government. It would have been the height of folly to insist upon the loan being issued in these conditions merely because the floating of £10,000,000 had been guaranteed. He could conceive no greater disservice that could be done either to the Transvaal or this country than to have insisted on doing such a preposterous thing.

*Mr. McCRAE said the right hon. Gentleman forgot that the Transvaal was asked to raise a loan of £35,000,000, Mr. RITCHIE said that was all the more reason for not putting the other burden upon the colony. The £35,000,000 loan was for purposes altogether different. It was mainly for the purposes of the development of the Transvaal itself, and for the payment in the Transvaal of money to those to whom it was owing. It was after considering that the interest on that loan would have to be debited to the revenue of the Transvaal that they found it impossible to insist upon £10,000,000 being raised at that time. He had greater hopes than the hon. Gentleman of the future of the Transvaal. He believed its future would be one of boundless prosperity. He based that opinion, not only on the produce of the mines, but on the agricultural future before the colony. He did not take the view that the new body which was created was likely to repudiate that which was undoubtedly properly and fairly due to us; only he did not think the best way of maintaining good relations with the Transvaal was to endeavour to incite the people there to repudiate the undertaking which those who were at the time responsible gave to us. His main object, however, was to show that from the information he then had in his possession, he was not only justified in so doing, but would have been deserving of condemnation if he had not taken into account that large sum of money which we had every reason to expect from the Transvaal and which, in the opinion of the Government, would in course of time come into the British Exchequer.

Mr. DILLON said he made no charge of want of good faith on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. What he complained of was that false information had been systematically sent from South Africa to delude this country.

Mr. RITCHIE said he was not attributing any charge to the hon. Member; he was simply defending his own action. No one regretted more than he did that the hopes of the Government had been disappointed; but, while he admitted he had been too optimistic, he repeated that, looking at the information he then had, he was justified in taking the course which he did.

Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) said he had no desire to blame the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon for having been misled by the invincible optimism of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had misled the Member for Croydon, misled the Government, and misled the House of Commons. Where was he? How was it that whenever debates arose about this £30,000,000 loan the right hon. Gentleman was never in his place? This mania on the part of some Members on the other side for running away whenever an awkward question arose was really becoming a matter of considerable inconvenience to the House of Commons, and ought to be severely reprobated. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had stated that the sum of £30,000,000 was undoubtedly and justly due. Could he give any instance in modern times in which one country which had been conquered by another had been made by that other country to pay part of the cost of the war? The right hon. Gentleman had also said that the amount of the claim—*i.e.*, the £30,000,000—was a tribute to our moderation, that we might reasonably have asked for more, and he had also accused the hon. Member for East Mayo of inciting the inhabitants of the Transvaal to repudiate the loan. He ventured to say that there was something very much more important than the repudiation of the loan, viz., our future relations with the Transvaal and the great danger that the inhabitants might feel that we were pressing unduly for our pound of flesh.

He wanted to ask the House to consider the actual facts of the case. In the first place there was no guarantee as to the £30,000,000. The guarantee was for the £10,000,000, and the guarantors were perfectly willing to carry that out. All he knew as to the £30,000,000 was that a resolution was passed by certain persons in Johannesburg approving the principle of the loan. That approval was subject to conditions; in the first place the financial position of the Transvaal was to allow of it; in the second place, no tax was to be placed on land; in the third place, only 10 per cent. was to be put on mining profits; and, in the fourth place, it was not to hinder the development of the Transvaal. He did not think anybody could call that a guarantee, neither could they call it a debt of honour on the part of the country. The people who passed the resolution were bound in honour to try to induce the country to pay the £30,000,000, but that was the only obligation of honour that pertained to the matter. It was true that other circumstances had arisen since. It was true that the £30,000,000 loan was made an excuse for inducing us to allow the introduction of Chinese labour. It was true that diamonds had been found in the Premier Mine. But it was rather a monstrous doctrine that we should seek to take advantage of the Premier Mine, except in so far as it relieved the financial situation there, in order to enforce the £30,000,000 or any part of it. If we did that we should be straying dangerously near to the principle of interfering with taxation—a principle that lost us our American Colonies 100 years ago.

Would anybody venture to say that the conditions laid down for the issue of the £30,000,000 loan were likely soon to be found in the Transvaal? His hon. friends on the Opposition Benches, although they might not agree with the hon. Member for East Mayo or himself about the matter, practically all agreed that we were not going to get this money, but a great many of them said we ought to try to get it. On a previous occasion, when dealing with this matter, he made an appeal on "broad Imperial grounds," and the phrase was somewhat laughed at. Might he remind his hon. friends that the enthusiastic loyalty of our Colonies was due to the principles adopted and pushed by the Liberal Party, principles that gave them freedom to direct their action as they liked and principles that gave them absolute fiscal autonomy? He admitted that the Liberal Party stumbled upon those principles almost by chance. Some members of the Liberal Party desired to make it easy for the Colonies "to cut the painter," but they at any rate said, "We cannot keep them by force permanently; let us give them autonomy." And autonomy was given, with the result that our self-governing Colonies had become enthusiastically loyal. It was because he saw in the great eagerness of this House to enforce this £30,000,000 loan a danger of interfering with that fundamental principle of fiscal autonomy that he ventured to ask the House to pause.

He knew that those who took the line he was taking would be taunted with inciting to repudiation. He was not inciting the people of the Transvaal to repudiation. We had a perfect right to the £350,000 which we had saved them by guaranteeing the £35,000,000 loan, and we were fully entitled to ask for the issue of the £10,000,000, because the interest would be paid by that £350,000. But if we sought to impose the further loan, he was convinced that the *Het folk* and the Responsible Government Association would inevitably use the refusal to find the money as one of the chief planks in the first contested election under the new Constitution. That would be a serious matter, because it would inevitably stir up bad blood between them and us. Even if he stood alone—but he was glad to know that he did not—he would beg the House seriously to consider this matter, and not in any way to seek to enforce the loan. If the people of the Transvaal chose to send us the money, well and good, but let there be no talk about a "debt of honour." There was no debt of honour, but there was an obligation of honour upon certain individuals who had no right to speak for anybody but themselves and the association they directly represented. They did not represent the Boers or a great portion of the whites. He appealed to the House to leave the matter to the people, and not to be disappointed if we did not get any of the money. Beyond the £10,000,000, he doubted whether we ought to claim the money; he did not think we ought, but he was certain we should not get it, and he wished the House would see the wisdom of giving up the claim.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had been in the House a good many years, but he had never heard a more unprovoked, more ungenerous, and more unfair outburst than that with which the hon. Member for Oldham began his speech.

MR. EMMOTT: Why is it unfair?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he supposed the subject of the Transvaal Loan was sufficiently germane to the Finance Bill to admit of its being discussed in this clause, but there was nothing in the clause itself to suggest that such a discussion would arise, and there was nothing either in the Amendments on the Paper to suggest it. Yet the hon. Member, in the absence of the Member for West Birmingham, and without giving what was usual between private Members—notice to the Member whose conduct he proposed to challenge——

*MR. EMMOTT: I think the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly fair in that. I ought not to have attacked the Member for West Birmingham for his absence this afternoon, and I withdraw that part of what I said entirely, but I cannot withdraw it entirely as regards previous occasions when he has not been here. I ought not to have said it in reference to this afternoon, and I am sorry.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he wished the hon. Member would withdraw the whole, but he should say no more about it. As to the debate, he could only beg the House to consider whether it did in fact advance any national interest by such a discussion. He needed scarcely to say that he did not in any way share in the criticism directed against his hon. friend the Member for Croydon for his Budget speech two years ago, or for the anticipations which he then made. Although the result of the past two years had been to show that he had expected the prosperity of the Transvaal to come earlier than in fact it had done, he did not doubt to-day, any more than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon did, that there was a great and prosperous future before the Transvaal, and that it might be well within its power in the future to fulfil the obligation which they had anticipated might have been fulfilled in the course of the three years spoken of; but he did ask whether the national interest or the Imperial interest was served by a series of speeches in which our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal were alternately told that they were too mean to pay, that they ought not to be called upon to pay, that they were too poor to pay, and that they ought to be ashamed of themselves for not paying. He did not believe any of these lines was calculated to promote either good feeling or mutual respect, or to secure a settlement of this question as he hoped it would be settled, and as he was sure it ought to be settled, by the common support of both Parties acting in support of common Imperial interests and with a common regard to the honour and dignity of the British name. He appealed to the Committee to bring to a close a discussion which led to no useful result, in order that they might start clear on Monday with the first of the new clauses which raised the important question of the coal duty, and which he was as anxious as other hon. Members should begin at the most convenient time.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that if any hon. Members took the trouble to look through the accounts of bankers they would find an item "doubtful debts." Why was that put in? Everybody knew that doubtful debts meant bad debts. What they complained of was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer persisted in treating this very doubtful debt as a positive asset. He did so in his calculations, and they had not got a larger Sinking Fund because of this asset. He should like to know whether an actuary in the City would say that this debt was worth more than £1,000,000 sterling. Could the right hon. Gentleman induce any firm in the City to give him £1,000,000 sterling for this debt? It was all very well for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take a sanguine view of the Transvaal and say he was sure they would pay this debt. They might say that of any kind of property. They might say it in regard to land, but if a mortgage was asked for upon land, it would only be advanced in proportion to the actual value and not according to the prospective chance value. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said they were doing a bad service to the cause of Imperialism when his hon. friend the Member for Oldham said he did not think the Transvaal ought to be called upon to pay this debt. They must deal with actual facts and not probabilities, and surely his hon. friend had a right to protest against the right hon. Gentleman taking this asset as being of any actual value.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham went to South Africa, and they were told that they would at least get £40,000,000, £50,000,000, or even £60,000,000 from the Transvaal. That was the prevalent idea at that time. The right hon. Gentleman's bargain was, "I will guarantee interest on £35,000,000, provided you will agree to raise a loan of £30,000,000 in consideration of what you owe for the war." The right hon. Gentleman's boast was that this was not as much as it ought to have been, but in his opinion "a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush." If the right hon. Gentleman had come home with this £30,000,000 instead of the benevolent guarantee that these millionaires would pay, or if he had come back with good bills saying that they would take the risk, then he should have said that he had made a good bargain. But he came home and said they were to have this £30,000,000 some time. They now knew that the Transvaal could not pay it, and all they had got was a promise to pay. They had derived no benefit whatever from the loan they had guaranteed. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not present, because he should have liked an explanation from him as to why he made this extremely bad bargain. He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to take it into his consideration at all, because if they got this money it would be simply wonderful. He would suggest that they should say to the gentlemen who guaranteed this money, "You pay the £10,000,000 down and agree to raise the interest on the balance as a specific debt to be charged upon your mines." That would be a good bargain for this country. He protested against the Chancellor of the Exchequer perpetually treating this debt as a good asset, because it was not a good asset. If he were one of the inhabitants of the Transvaal, and not connected with the mines, he should object to this debt. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, when he was in South Africa, called a meeting of some of the mineowners and they made this bargain with him. He wished to know what right they had to pledge the country. They were told that it was a matter of honour with the Transvaal to pay, but the people of the Transvaal had not pledged themselves to pay. The right hon. Gentleman said that the guaranteed loan was intended to develop the country, but who would benefit by that. Why, the mineowners. A large amount of the money had been spent upon railways, and the mineowners were the persons who mainly benefited by railways. They had largely benefited by the expenditure of the £35,000,000 loan, and therefore they ought to be ready themselves to pay the £30,000,000.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 226; Noes, 181. (Division List No. 178.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, RtHn. Gerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt.Hn.Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, RtHn. J. A. (Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward

Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Coddington, Sir William
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower H'm'ts
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailywn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (Lond'nd'ry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George

Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J F (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.- Col. A. R.
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E. (Wigt'n)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamst'w
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick

Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew
Sinclair, Louis Romford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Rt Hn J Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J M‘Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col Sir C E H. (Sheffield
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C. E. (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Charles G E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.

Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn
Brigg, John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn

Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick

Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, A. (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Tillett, Louis John
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred W (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. M'Kenna and Mr. Dalziel.

Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was now in his place, it was only right, in the interests of decency and fair play, that he should be apprised of what took place in his absence. Several hon. Members had complained that on every occasion when the Transvaal war loan contribution was discussed the right hon. Gentleman had never been present. He rather thought that on one occasion the right hon. Gentleman did make a speech on the subject, but at any rate complaint was made that he was not present that afternoon. That complaint was hardly justified, because the Amendment, as it stood on the Paper, gave no indication that the question would be raised. But as the right hon. Gentleman was now present, and as he was the person principally concerned in this matter, he would probably avail himself of the opportunity which he, with great modesty, offered him of making an explanation.

The remarks he was making were not directed in any personal sense against the right hon. Gentleman, but he was the only person who was able to give the required information.

The question was whether this guarantee received by the right hon. Gentleman during his visit to the Transvaal was something which could be regarded as a valuable asset or not. That was the whole point. Were we or were we not to receive a contribution from the Transvaal towards the expenses of the war? It was said that the gentlemen who gave the guarantee had no authority to speak for the people of the Transvaal, and he believed that that was to a large extent true. It was a personal guarantee. They had now got to a point when there ought to be no humbugging or finessing. For two years they had been told that the money market was unfavourable, but now it was very favourable, and still there was no attempt to issue this loan. He noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a consultation with the ex-Colonial Secretary. Had he still the same confidence that the pledge would be redeemed? His confidence was shaken. They could not blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was sitting there with a claim which he inherited. There was every indication that this claim would be repudiated by the Transvaal. It was on the threshold of representative government, and this matter would be made the subject of agitation and would be one of the governing issues in the colony unless the Imperial Government came to some definite opinion on the matter. Was this asset of any value, and did the Government attach any importance to it? Would the Government make any representation to the Transvaal that they must pay this contribution? There was a complaint that they were apt, in discussing this question, to interfere with the prospect of the contribution being paid. He admitted that might be so; but was the House to sit silent while no effort was being made by the Government. They had now arrived at a point when that policy had to cease. They had a right to ask if the Transvaal was going to pay. He did not suggest, for a moment, that any undue pressure should be brought to bear; but the Committee ought to know whether the Transvaal intended to repudiate responsibility in the matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had now an opportunity of explaining how the matter stood.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham; W.): I am much obliged to the hon. Member opposite for his good intentions in affording me the opportunity of which he has spoken. So far as he wishes to have my opinion in the matter under discussion I am perfectly ready to give it to him, but he will understand that, as I am no longer in the Government, I cannot speak for the Government; I can only speak of what happened while I was a member of the Government. Before, however, I come to that, let me say that if anyone in my absence has been complaining that I was not here to meet any charges that might be brought against me, I think that is extremely unreasonable. I had not the remotest idea that anything in connection with the Transvaal loan was coming on this afternoon, and by the merest chance I happened to enter the House, and that only after the division had been called.

Speaking for myself and not for the Government, I do not think there is anything I have ever said on the subject of this loan which I wish now to withdraw or change in the slightest degree. It is quite likely that, speaking to this House, I expressed anticipations as to the way this loan would be raised and this contribution would be made which time has shown to be too sanguine, but beyond that I cannot call to mind anything on which I need express a change of opinion now. What were the circumstances? I think the majority of the people of this country—and none were more strenuous than hon. Gentlemen opposite—were of opinion that the British subjects of the Transvaal were under an honourable obligation to contribute towards the expense of the war in which they were so much interested, and in which they had entirely concurred. I share that opinion. The only question was, What would be a fair sum for them to pay, and under what conditions? I went to the Transvaal with the idea of ear-marking certain sources of revenue and continuing to set them to the credit of the Exchequer until a large fixed sum had been reached. But on the representations that were made when I went to South Africa I agreed that that was not a wise policy to adopt, that it was a kind of policy which most probably would result in friction and dissatisfaction, that it would be regarded as a tribute, and not only as a tribute, but it would have caused a constant and perpetual interference on the part of the Exchequer of this country in connection with the finances of the new colony, a state of things which would be intolerable in a self-governing colony; and, as my view was that we should treat the new colonies as far as possible as self-governing colonies, it was also, as I considered, intolerable in the preliminary stages. Therefore I had recourse to an attempt to agree upon a fixed sum which should be raised immediately, or as early as the market would allow, and which should be raised by way of loan, the transaction being thus concluded at the earliest possible moment and in the simplest possible way.

Now, by whom was that view of the arrangement which was ultimately come to assented to? Of course the Boers did not assent to it. However fair it might be that they should pay some sort of indemnity for the war they commenced, you could not expect them to assent to the arrangements made willingly and voluntarily; but I must say that, at the time of which I am speaking, there did not seem to be any strong feeling—not a particle—and the reason was that they were more anxious for other things, and knew perfectly well that a very small proportion of this tax could under any circumstances fall upon them. They saw, as did everybody else, that it was really a question how much the gold industry, speaking widely and including every class engaged in it, from the millionaire to the smallest labourer, should pay. Of that interest the representatives that were got together were, I think, most satisfactory. There was not a branch of the industry, no important section of the industry, which was left out, and we specially took care to call upon the representatives of the working classes, who appeared at the final meeting. This meeting sent to me a resolution which was passed by the whole of those present with the exception of four, agreeing and pledging themselves to give their support in every way in their power. The four who did not sign that statement or requisition were the four working men. After this was known—I think within twenty-four hours, or, at all events, forty-eight hours—these four gentlemen came to me to say that they had been mistaken, that they had objected to some small question, but that they were entirely in favour of the contribution, and that they, the working men, were quite as ready to pay their share of the expense as anyone else. I may say that the broad and patriotic view taken by them was confirmed by some of the smaller trade unions of the country. That is the position, and I have no reason whatever to believe that any of these persons have changed their opinions. I am sure every one of them feels that he is bound in honour to do everything in his power to carry out that agreement.

I confess I do not think it very encouraging to them, indeed I think it is, if not insulting, most offensive to assume, as hon. Members opposite have done, that they do not mean to observe their obligation. I think it is bad policy in the case of a debt of this kind to tell your debtor he is a fool if he pays. I do not believe that that sort of argument will have any effect upon the men with whom I dealt. If you express the belief that they will be false to their word it may be they will feel offended and not pay, and I certainly do not think that you are assisting, I will not say the Government, but the people of this country, in obtaining the relief to which I think they are honestly entitled. If you do not get the £30,000,000 I think you are largely responsible for their default but that I do not anticipate. At that time everybody expected—that side of the House as well as this—there would be an immense development and increase in the prosperity of South Africa, and that that increase would take place immediately and continuously. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] Of course, if you hold me literally I will not say every one did, but the majority did, and let me say also that those people whose business it is to govern their actions by their knowledge or financial probabilities had complete confidence in the future of the country. There was a beginning of the development, but it came to an end very soon. Instead of finding the gold industry recovering as quickly as we had anticipated it would, and that the development of other industries such as the copper and coal mines was making greater progress, we know for a time there was a very great depression. In consequence of that the conditions under which this contribution was promised did not arise, they were postponed. It was a condition that we should not place on the Transvaal additional taxation for the purpose of paying interest on this contribution. It was another condition that we should not introduce the loan or force the introduction of the loan at a time when the money market was unfavourable, and we undertook to consult financiers conversant with the matter before we put the loan upon the market. It is quite true that I thought the loan would be introduced, and that in less than three years the whole of the contribution would be paid. In that I have been disappointed, and I think everybody with me. The trade, prosperity, energy, and enterprise have not come as quickly as I expected. Now I believe most people think that things are improved. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite shakes his head.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): No, I only hope it may be so.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg his pardon; I thought by that gesture the hon. and learned Gentleman was expressing dissent. All I can say is that all concerned in the Transvaal take a very hopeful view of the situation. It may have been impossible in the present year to furnish sufficient income to pay the interest on the first instalment of £10,000,000 in addition to what is required for the needs of the Transvaal itself, but there is no reason whatever to doubt that the money will be forthcoming next year, and, if so, next year is the time when we ought to ask those who gave the assurance to do all in their power to get the obligation acknowledged. If His Majesty's Government had not decided to give to the Transvaal a more liberal Constitution than it possessed before they could have gone to the Legislative Council—and there was not the least doubt as to what their decision would have been—or the Government could have done another thing, they could have gone back to the original idea of earmarking the sums to which they thought they were entitled as a charge on the revenue. But they thought they were justified in trusting to those with whom we had hitherto treated and who had given us the only undertaking that could have been given at that time, when there were no representative institutions in the Transvaal and when those gentlemen only represented themselves. The Government have explained their reasons for leaving it to the new representative authority to decide whether or not they will confirm the action of those with whom I had necessarily to negotiate.

The hon. Gentleman opposite asked me what my opinion is, whether I think we have a valuable asset? Yes I do. I am quite certain of this, that in the new Assembly there will be some of these men. I should not wonder if it did not include a large proportion of those who are direct representatives of the Boer population, still I hope there will be a majority who will accept this obligation as an obligation of honour and will give it legal application. I can only give my own opinion, I can give no proof. It is open to hon. Gentlemen on the other side to think I am too sanguine, but I am sanguine because I believe absolutely in the honour of those with whom I have dealt. I may be disappointed, but that is a hypothesis that I refuse to consider. It is because I believe in the thoroughly honourable spirit of these men that I say it is a valuable asset, and that I see no reason whatever why in a comparatively short time we should not get the whole sum.

Sir ROBERT REID said he remembered very distinctly the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman first dealt with the subject of the Transvaal contribution towards the expenses of the war, and he never heard a rosier picture of the prospects of any country than the right hon. Gentleman then gave of the future of South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman then said nothing about the payment of the money being conditional, except that it was conditional upon the £35,000,000 loan being issued and the absolution of the mining industry from taxation in excess of 10 per cent. Both of those conditions were fulfilled, but nothing had been paid. More than that, the right hon. Gentleman stated that the first instalment was to be paid on January 1st of last year and the second instalment on January 1st of this year. Bearing these facts in mind, it was somewhat astonishing to hear the right hon. Gentleman now declare that he had nothing to withdraw from the statement which he originally made to the House. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman in his visit to South Africa was actuated by the most patriotic motives. He was quite ready to credit the right hon. Gentleman with patriotic motives; he only wished the right hon. Gentleman would be as ready to give similar credit to those who opposed him. But th right hon. Gentleman went out in a spirit of impulse and in a spirit of credulity, ready to listen to all who sympathised or pretended they sympathised with his Imperialistic ideas. The right hon. Gentleman also believed implicitly the statements which had been sent home by Lord Milner. The most brilliant anticipations were indulged in by the right hon. Gentleman and by Lord Milner and they had all turned out to be appallingly wrong from beginning to end. All he could say in reference to that was that he thought the right hon. Gentleman did owe to the House something in the nature of a withdrawal or expression of regret that he had misled the House—not consciously, of course, because he believed the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly sincere; but by the erroneous judgment he formed on the materials laid before him.

The right hon. Gentleman said it would be insulting to expect that the Boers should willingly pay any part of this contribution. He was astonished when he heard that. He did not wish to say anything in the least suggestive of repudiation or anything affecting the honour of the persons who made the bargain, but he did say that, if they were to believe that to ask one-half of the population of that country willingly to contribute would be an insult, what conclusions were the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the House to draw as to the propriety of asking anything at all? Nothing could be more dangerous, as our experience in the United States showed, than for us to endeavour to exact from any people who were under our rule, and especially people of our own stock, money which they did not think they ought to pay. For himself, he was perfectly content with the position the Government had taken up. The people of the Transvaal should not be pressed either way; the matter should be left to their sense of right and wrong, fairness and unfairness; but he could not help feeling, when they were dealing with this whole transaction, that it was not quite right of the right hon. Gentleman, after this tremendous blunder in regard to finance had been made, to come to the House and say he had nothing whatever to withdraw from the statement he had made.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN appealed to the Committee to come to a decision on the clause in accordance with the arrangement that had been made.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he was sorry that he was not present when the arrangement alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman took place, but he understood from his hon. friends that there was nothing in the nature of a pledge given by hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House. If such a pledge had been given he certainly should not have broken it, but he was informed that it was not the case that any such pledge had been given. It was most important that they should have a full discussion upon this matter, especially after the very important speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The right hon. Gentleman held a peculiarly important position in regard to this transaction, which was negotiated and carried through by him. When the right hon. Gentleman said he had nothing to withdraw from the statement he made two or three years ago he could not possibly have looked up the speech he delivered on that occasion, otherwise he would never have made such an assertion. In the course of his speech on May 6th, 1903, the right hon. Gentleman said, speaking of this transaction—

> "In the first place it is a final arrangement. After three years we shall near no more of the subject. The bill will have been paid; the claim will have been met."

and he added—

> "This undertaking to pay the contribution was part of the bargain on tne strength of which the Transvaal was to get a loan of £35,000,000."

They had had their £35,000,000, but what had become of their part of the bargain?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is what we have got to see.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he supposed it was another case of next year. It was always "this year, next year, some time, never," with regard to South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman said he had the pledge of four working men, but how could he expect four working men in the Transvaal to keep their pledges if Prime Ministers at home broke theirs—and at the right hon. Gentleman's instigation? The right hon. Gentleman said they had got to trust these men. They had trusted too much and had got too little. They had spent all this money, and had got nothing but promises. He remembered that the prospectus was exceedingly glowing, but the only people who had had the dividends were the mine-owners. The right hon. Gentleman told them that these mine owners had actually promised to give them £10,000,000; in fact, they had signed such an undertaking, and said that he had got the signature of all these British patriots. Those were the people for whom this country spent £250,000,000. They signed this contract, and the right hon. Gentleman said, "They are men of honour; you must trust them, and they will pay." Was the right hon. Gentleman as sure now as he was three years ago that they would pay? These mineowners said, "Give us £35,000,000 down and we will pay you £10,000,000 some time or other." They had got the £35,000,000, but where was our £10,000,000? It was the confidence trick which had been played over and over again in South Africa. Last week two dividends, one of 137 per cent. and another of 112 per cent., were declared by this industry which could not carry out a contract, and he thought the House were entitled to know when these people were going to pay this £10,000,000. It was time that they got to know once for all whether the Government really meant to press for this contribution. Every promise that had been made by the Government, every prospect that had been laid before them with regard to South Africa by the right hon. Gentleman and those who advised the House, had turned out in the past to be false, and this was only one out of the myriad of similar statements that had been made.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 201; Noes, 162. (Division List No. 179.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J A (Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-

Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, RtHnSirJ(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J E (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Hamilton, RtHnLordG (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, SirJames(Staffords, NW.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J.(Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry

Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawson, JohnGrant (Yorks, NR
Lee, ArthurH (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Freder'k N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter(Bristol, S.)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, SirLewis(Edinburgh W.)
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. H. E. (Wigt'n)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, DavidJ (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. RobertWellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson

Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hn. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, SirHarry S.(Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Rt. HnJParker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col. Sir C. EH(Sheffield
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir WilliamH
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. CE (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Charles G.E. (Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks.
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert

Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay(Galway)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice, Capt EC(S. Andrw'sBghs

Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander(Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E.(Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John

Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. JohnP. (Galway, N)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn.CR.(Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, JA(Glamorgan,Gower
Tillett, Louis John
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J.H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson,Fred.W.(Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York,W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Dalziel and Mr. Benn.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

ARTERIAL DRAINAGE (IRELAND).

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.) said the Motion on the Paper which he should move before he sat down charged the Government with indifference to the destruction of property in Ireland through the overflowing of certain rivers. It was no recent complaint that the Government had neglected to look after the arterial drainage of that country which they undertook to govern. During the early part of the last century both landlords and tenants repeatedly appealed to the Government to protect their lands from the damage caused by recurring inundations. For thirty years after the Union the Government did nothing, and the owners and occupiers of flooded lands in the North and East, as well as the South and West of Ireland appealed in vain to the Government to render them some assistance so that their land might not be injured and their property in some cases completely destroyed. At length the Government woke up to the necessity of doing something, and they did it in their characteristically generous fashion. In 1831 they passed an Act of Parliament which enabled the owners and occupiers of property liable to be flooded to form joint stock companies for the purposes of arterial drainage. The Act did not provide any money for the purpose, no money was provided for even the initial expense, it merely condescended to tell the proprietors that they might carry out arterial drainage with the aid of private funds without suggesting where those funds were to come from. Did the Government suppose that the landed proprietors of any part of Ireland could float large joint stock companies on the swollen waters of the Shannon, the Bann, the Barrow, and the Suck? What could anyone expect would be the result of such an Act of Parliament as that. It could not possibly have been expected that the impoverished tenants of so poor a country should contribute such large sums of money as would be required for this purpose, and the landlords certainly were not likely to put their hands into their own pockets, though it was very doubtful whether they had anything in their pockets at that time. At any rate, the Act of 1831 appeared to be an absolute mockery. Many years passed and the tenants and the owners suffered from the damage to property and injury to health caused by the flooding of their dwellings, many inches of mud being frequently left on the floors of the cottages when the waters subsided, leaving the people in despair.

Eleven years passed by, when the Government passed another Act which was even more generous than the former. The Act of 1842 enabled landlords to appeal to the Government to carry out drainage works, and the Government promised to undertake them under the superintendence of the Board of Works' engineers. This was the first time any mention was made of that Board though it was constituted in 1831, when the first Act was passed, but now the Board of Works came in and unfortunately they would find that all through the history of these attempts to drain the great rivers of Ireland the Board of Works had interfered, with almost disastrous effects, in nearly every case. Under the Act of 1842 the Government told the landlords and occupiers that the main source of the funds required for carrying out arterial drainage works should again be looked for from private means. That was another sham Act, but the Government certainly did add that they would contribute something to the improved value of the lands, which meant that after owners and occupiers had found thousands and thousands of pounds and carried out drainage works, and had improved and increased the value of the lands adjoining the rivers, the Government would come down and lend money on the improved value of those lands. In 1842 the terrible famine broke out in Ireland, and all the civilised world was horrified at the number of deaths which occurred from day to day from starvation, and the Government were shamed into doing something. They chose arterial drainage as a reproductive work and a number of schemes were started to give employment, and relief drainage works sprang up where required and people grew hopeful that they were going to have their land secured from almost annual floods. But in two years the Government discovered the famine was over and, immediately, they directed that all the works started by them to give employment to the people should be stopped. It was one of the most heartless things that any Government ever did; there was universal consternation in Ireland and there was a collapse of drainage work everywhere. Everything was thrown into the melting-pot and the people in their misery gave way to despair.

The Government left things as they were and no money was given for the purposes of carrying on drainage works until 1863. In 1863 an Act of Parliament came into existence under which the local authorities were authorised to start drainage boards. Provisional Orders were obtained under that Act and thousands upon thousands were spent. But whatever might have been done, the Bann had not been drained although the efforts made had drained the pockets of the people North and South. Although for fifty years the people had been paying drainage rates their lands were still flooded, their property was still swept away, and their crops were left rotting on the sodden fields. The same tale had to be told in respect to the Barrow, in reference to which inquiries had been held since 1847, but nothing had been done. A Commission of inquiry recommended that the Barrow, being a most important river, should be made a matter of national concern, and the same Report was made in regard to the Shannon. Commissioners had made similar recommendations in regard to the Suck, but that river was yet undrained, and whenever there was a rainfall crops were swept away. The Act of 1862 had in fact proved of no avail owing to the ineptitude of the Anglo-Irish Board of Works in Dublin, and to the inadequate assistance given by this country to drainage works in Ireland. The Shannon also was suffering from incompleteness of treatment, and there was no doubt, as a Commission had declared in 1887, that defective plans and miscalculations on the part of the Board of Works' engineers had contributed to the failure of many schemes. That was the whole thing in a nutshell. The neglect of the Government had been criminal having regard to the fact that the country was mainly dependent upon agriculture. Engineers of the Board of Works overruled and condemned each other's plans, and meanwhile the unfortunate people suffered the loss of their property.

One very important recommendation of the Commission of 1887 was that the rivers should be made national concerns and ought to be drained and made secure with public money. They also recommended that all arterial drainage should in future be taken out of the hands of the Board of Works and that a new department should be started to deal with the question of Irish arterial drainage as a whole. If that course were followed, probably a solution of the whole problem would be found, great as it was. It had been said that £2,400,000 had been spent by this country in Ireland upon arterial drainage, but he failed to trace how the money had been spent. It was not spent on the Bann or the Barrow. Only £50,000 was given to the Suck, and there was not very much given to the Shannon in recent times. Where, then, did the £2,400,000 go? Much of the money had gone in the starting of drainage works which were afterwards abandoned. If £2,400,000 was spent during the famine, it could not be said that none of it was repaid, because special taxes were put on Ireland for the purpose of recovering the money advanced to the country during the famine year. He could not possibly see where the £2,400,000 went, but supposing it was spent on arterial drainage in a hundred years, how did that compare with what other countries had done? Belgium, which was little more than a quarter the size of Ireland, had spent £16,000,000 in the last twenty or twenty-five years. Belgium had been attending to her own affairs, collecting her own taxes, and spending them in the country for the benefit of the people and the improvement of the land. Belgium had her own army and navy and the busy port of Antwerp, because her money was not taken from Brussels to London and kept there. Her cash accounts were not kept by another Government where any amount of manipulation might be carried out. The Government of Holland, another small country, had spent £15,000,000 on drainage. Germany had spent £15,000,000, but being a large and rich country that, of course, was not much when compared with the sum spent by Belgium and Holland. France had spent £30,000,000 on arterial drainage. He doubted whether the drainage of any one of these countries was of quite as much importance as would be the drainage of the rivers in Ireland, which were in the habit of overflowing their banks and destroying a considerable amount of property. He hoped that hon. Members from Ulster would express their opinions with courage in regard to the condition of the Bann.

What was the Government going to do? Were they going to allow this state of things to continue in Ireland? They knew very well that there was no possibility of the Irish people, tenants and owners, subscribing the money required for such a great work as arterial drainage. The tenants found that they had as much as they could do in making their rents. How would the landlords sell their land? Would they expect twenty-five years purchase for land which was covered with water every other year? If they did, he doubted very much whether they were likely to get it. He would ask the Chief Secretary to give some assurance to the people of Ireland that the Government meant to take this question seriously in hand and deal with it in a generous and effective manner. There was no use tinkering with the question any longer. It had been too long trifled with, and the time had come when the Government should decide on some course. It was the duty of the Government to protect the property of the people of the country which they undertook to govern agains the will of the people themselves. He did not believe it would take quite so much money as the late Chief Secretary said last year. The right hon. Gentleman said it would take £20,000,000 to carry out effectively the arterial drainage of Ireland. That was a great exaggeration. No doubt it would take a great deal of money, and if the Government said that they had no money he would ask them to take £1,000,000 a year out of the over-taxation account until this drainage work was finished. It was the business of the Government to find the money which was necessary to save the lives and property of the people of that country. It was possible they might be told that another inquiry would be necessary. There had been a good many of these inquiries in Ireland, and what had come out of the whole of them? Nothing whatever. The representatives of Ireland wanted the Government to take in hand some practical solution of the question, and if they did not do so he thought they should surrender the government of the country to the people themselves.

*MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) seconded the Motion. He said that while differences of opinion existed on many matters connected with the government of Ireland, his hon. friend had to-night introduced a subject on which there was perfect agreement between all Parties in the House. In his investigation of the subject he found last year the lion of the Bann lying down with the lamb from the beautiful Barrow, and a little child of the lordly Shannon leading them on their peaceful watery way of arterial drainage. That, he considered, was a manifestation of unity which might be regarded as free from hostile and repellent elements. He found that last year hon. Members from the North of Ireland were prepared to disrupt and destroy their own Government in the interest of the Bann. While the representatives from the North and South of Ireland were agreed on this subject, he found also that the Government itself was in favour of the arterial drainage of Ireland. It was a Conservative Government which appointed the Commission in 1887 to report on the question of arterial drainage in Ireland. In 1888 the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, the present Prime Minister, introduced three Bills dealing with this important subject, not one of which was passed. It was the late Chief Secretary who appointed an eminent hydraulic engineer last year to inquire into the drainage of the Bann and to report, and he reported. It was the present Chief Secretary who had appointed an eminent hydraulic engineer this year to report on the drainage of the Bann, and he would report.

Why was there such perfect agreement on this subject? It was because arterial drainage in Ireland, as elsewhere, was regarded as of national importance. Among the many reasons why it should be so regarded, there was one which stood out pre-eminently beyond the others, namely, the existence of clouds in Ireland. It was said by the late Lord Beaconsfield, when Mr. Disraeli, that all the evils of Ireland might be traced to the fact of its close proximity to the melancholy ocean. That statement was exploded by the Royal Commission, because they said that much of the evil of Ireland was due to the existence of clouds. Clouds might be beautiful from an æsthetic point of view, but they did not respect political principles. A Nationalist cloud springing up out of the Barrow might, with favouring winds from the South-West, sail north, and in summer flood time—in that period which embraced the 12th of July—might in its darkness and obliquity burst and damp the ardour of those celebrating the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of William III. Of course, an Orange cloud might return the compliment and deluge the banners of the Papists in their treasonable practices. Hence it was a national subject, and therefore he found that last year Orange and Green were blended in the lobby in hostility to the Government, who, with words of sympathy on their lips, had no promise of performance and no hope of remedy of an admitted evil. "Adversity makes strange bedfellows."

In all civilised countries where the area of cultivable land was limited, the greatest attention had been paid to the subject of arterial drainage. He found from a report written by one of the commercial secretaries of the legation in Holland, and dated as far back as the sixties, that no less than £300,000,000 had been spent on the drainage of Holland. He had been at a loss to know what there was in the sand-hills, rabbit warrens, and swamps of Holland that entitled it to have spent upon it a sum equal to half the normal National Debt of Great Britain whilst a beggarly £1,500,000 was considered good enough to spend upon the most fertile soil of one of the fairest lands in the whole world. He could not understand it except for one reason, namely, that Holland was governed by the Dutch for Dutchmen, and Ireland was governed by the English for Englishmen. About three years ago the Associated Chambers of Commerce of this country applied to the Foreign Office to ask the Consular representatives abroad to inquire and report on the waterways of Europe. He would give a few quotations from their reports. The first and most interesting was that in regard to Austria-Hungary. After stating that in Austria alone £21,000,000 had been expended on river regulation, the report said—

> "The method 'had a twofold object in view.' Firstly, the regulation works are carried out in the interests of navigation by deepening channels, and, secondly, in the interest of agriculture by preventing, as far as possible, the overflowing of river banks in time of high water or floods."

> "In Hungary, as in Austria, except at the Iron Gates, no navigation tolls are levied, and the capital expended in developing and improving the waterway is sunk for the common weal, and no direct interest on the invested capital is looked for."

The same report said that in Hungary no less a sum than £22,000,000 was spent on the regulation of rivers and the construction of canals. The Hungarian Government paid in respect of one waterway alone, Iron Gates—sinking fund, £62,500; maintenance, £8,330; repairs, £11,040; in all £81,870. They received £72,000 in tolls. International treaties permitted and empowered Hungary to levy shipping taxes to the amount of the actual cost, but they did not do it.

In Belgium the capital expended during the period between 1875–1900 on waterways—which included the upkeep of embankments and the regulating and adapting of river beds—with a view to uniformity was £16,000,000. The State administered the greater portion of the waterways. The report said—

> "It is impossible to estimate even approximately the extent to which the improvement of the waterways has contributed in the great development of traffic."

In France, between 1871 and 1878, £9,640,000 was spent on waterways, and between 1879–1900 £18,000,000, making in all £27,640,000. The natural waterways had been radically transformed on the Rhone since 1860 by an expenditure of £3,240,000, or £15,360 per mile. On the Seine from Paris to Rouen there had been expended since 1878 £2,680,000, or £17,631 per mile. Just think of it. He asked Ulster Members to think how, if their ancestors had succeeded in separating Ireland from England, they would have fared if they had come within the sphere of influence of the French Republic. The banks of the Bann would have been to-day a blooming flower-garden, instead of a dismal swamp sending its mendicant Members to this House to beg a crumb of comfort from their master's table.

> "Practically the whole of the waterways system is the property of the State, which maintains it out of its public funds free of all tolls."

In Germany it was thought that the great floods that took place in the eighties were due to the navigation works which had been carried out at great expense, and a Commission was appointed in 1892 to inquire into the statement which was made, rightly or wrongly, by the farmers whose lands had been affected. The Commission found that the statement of the farmers had no justification, but they recommended that certain work should be carried out to improve the flow in flood time. Unlike the Commissions that sat on the subject in Ireland, their recommendations were instantly carried out and over £1,000,000 was expended on five rivers for the purpose of saving the lands from being flooded. A regular system of giving information of floods was established and organised for all the rivers, an this had proved most effective. The report contained the following—

> "Notice of high or low water or the approach of ice is at once communicated by telegraph, telephone, postcard, or messenger to interested persons or districts. In some districts this is done through the Press."

> "In the Elbe and Vistula districts a special telegraph and telephone system was established in 1890 and 1894 at a cost of over £10,000. On the Rhine, Elbe, and Oder it is now possible to give due notice of floods, etc., based on a close study of the upper reaches of the river."

> "Whenever danger is apprehended either through high water or ice a special service of men is employed for the particular stretch of river."

He had read these quotations merely for the purpose of backing up the representation of his hon. friend who opened the discussion that this was a national question everywhere.

Proceeding to deal with the case of Ireland, the hon. Member said he would take first the case of the Barrow, not because it happened to run through his own constituency and because many of his constituents were constantly suffering from this much neglected river, but he did so because it had been singled out by the Commission as an example of the neglect of arterial drainage in Ireland by England. It drained 408,000 acres, 45,000 of which were subject to floods three times a year. The Report of the 1887 Commission said that the Barrow district suffered more from floods than any other part of Ireland, and that altogether the condition of the district might be described as deplorable. In the year 1871 this deplorable condition of things was pointed out to the then Marquis of Hartington, the present Duke of Devonshire, who was acting as Chief Secretary for Ireland, by one whose words ought to have received attention—the Marquis of Drogheda—as representing himself and the other proprietors of land in the district. He described the condition of things which prevailed, and read the terms of the following resolution passed at a meeting attended by the whole of the owners of land by the Barrow—

> "That large tracts of land on the course of the River Barrow are frequently covered with flooded waters which, besides destroying or impairing vast quantities of crops, remain in a state of stagnation often for many weeks together, flooding numerous dwellings of the labouring classes. Often rendering the use of the public highways of the country impossible or dangerous, and rising into the streets, gardens, and houses of many of the towns in the district to the serious injury of the health of the population."

What had been done since then? Had anything been done for the Barrow? Nothing! Yes, the Prime Minister introduced three Bills in the year 1888, and in doing so, said—

> "The Barrow remains the chief example of the evils incident to the want of arterial drainage in Ireland."

That was the language used seventeen years after the resolution of the owners. It would be the same that evening, seventeen years after those Bills were introduced and withdrawn, and it would be the same seventeen years to come, when some future Irish Member drew attention to the scandalous neglect. What were those evils? It had been stated by the Commission of 1887 that the temperature in the middle part of Ireland, owing to these constant floods, was lower than in the North or South; that it was cold and unsuited to agriculture, that the sky was cloudy and prevented the ripening of grain; that the health of the people was prejudiced by damp; and that the towns suffered doubly, first from the want of drainage and then by the lack of locomotion when they were flooded. The health of the people was ruined; epidemics of fever followed the floods, and trade came to a standstill because the people could not get into the towns, which also suffered indirectly by the want of that progressive condition which followed from surrounding farms being in that prosperous state they would be in if free from periodical inundations. To remedy this state of things the Prime Minister, when Chief Secretary for Ireland, proposed certain works rather in excess of those recommended by the Commission of 1887. The Commission recommended an expenditure of £354,000, but the right hon. Gentleman said he was prepared to encourage an expenditure of £360,000, £125,000 of which was to be charged on the improvement area, £20,000 on the catchment area, and £215,000 to be a free grant. They were, in fact, to have no more clouds in Ireland—no more rain but the golden rain of English beneficence! What had become of that scheme? It was dead and had gone to that place which was said to be paved with good intentions. What was the use of arguing to the farmers on the banks of the Barrow, "You ought to be industrious and drain your land." What was the use of the farmer draining his land unless there was some arterial scheme into which he could drain it? That was the work they claimed ought to be done by the Government; it was work which had been done in every other country in the world except Ireland—Ireland which was governed by England.

He would give them another example of neglect. It was that of the Shannon. An old friend of his, now dead—once a respected Member of that House—said he knew of no fewer than seven Commissions that had sat on the Shannon. Lord Monck presided on a Commission which sat in Ireland, which reported in the year 1882, and which stated that a large extent of land along the whole course of the Shannon was subject to inundations at all times of the year. The spring and autumn floods often caused great damage, the former by spoiling the quality of the grass, the latter by damaging, and sometimes by altogether carrying off the hay. This Commission compared the interests of navigation with the interests of agriculture, and reported clearly in favour of the latter. Mr. Manning, the engineer employed at that time by the Public Works Board, said that no complete control of the Shannon existed, and he pointed out how control could be obtained. The Report recommended—

> "That it [the Shannon] remain in the care of the Commissioners of Public Works, who shall, while maintaining the navigation, regulate the depth of water so far as is in their power with a view primarily to the drainage of the country."

The Allport Commission of 1887 confirmed that conclusion and added—

> "This river, draining as it does so large a portion of Ireland, and being the outlet of several other important rivers, occupies an exceptional position, and is of national importance."

The Commission pointed out that the waters had overflowed the banks of the Shannon until they had covered nearly 21,000 acres, and they said it was futile to expect that the cost should be laid on the riparian owners, having regard to the fact that the Shannon was the largest river in the three kingdoms, that it was 125 miles long, and that no fewer than twenty-three tributary rivers and streams discharged their waters into it. They pointed out that the end to be attained was not the relief of lands on its margin but a lowering of the levels of the floods which would render it much more easy to undertake the improvement of the various important tributary rivers and streams. His hon. friend had referred to the case of the Suck, and he would add nothing to what he had said as to that. It was proposed in 1888 that the sum of £165,000 should be spent on the Shannon, £35,000 to be charged on the improvement area and the balance to be equally raised by loans to the catchment area and to the Government works already established there. There was to be no free grant. The Commission of 1887 recommended that £180,000 should be the amount of the charge on the district and that £100,000 should be granted by the State, it being held that with these two sums—making £280,000—Mr. Bateman's complete scheme could be carried out. It was necessary the whole system should be grappled with, otherwise the plan would be entirely inadequate. Yet nothing had been done up to the present, and the Shannon remained as much a crying evil as the Barrow.

Finally he came to the case of the Bann. He supposed he ought to apologise to hon. Members opposite for mentioning that case, but still it was an Irish river. The money already spent on the navigation of the Bann and the drainage of the country round about had been lost. Lord Monck's Commission said the works did not accomplish the drainage results which were expected of them, and there was no prospect of improvement. This scheme was now maintained at the expense of the cesspayers, many of whom strongly objected to supporting it and considered it was extremely mischievous. They recommended that the Navigation Board should be dissolved and that drainage trustees should be appointed to deal with the Bann solely in the interests of the drainage of the country. There was a complication arising from a weir at Toome which did not operate owing to the height of the water in the Lower Bann. It was clear that the whole trouble arose from the condition of the Lower Bann on account of a defect in the original design of the drainage works. An eminent hydraulic engineer appointed last year by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover estimated that it would take £150,000 to make effective the drainage of the Bann, whereas the then Chief Secretary in 1888 proposed an expenditure of £65,000 and the Commission of 1887 recommended an outlay of £75,000, £20,000 of which was to be a free grant. Nothing, however, had been done, and the story of the Bann was one of incompetence and neglect not confined to either Party in the State. It was due solely to the attempt of one country to deal with the affairs of another country. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh was very indignant in dealing with the subject; he complained that they had got nothing but sympathy from the British Government and that their patience was exhausted. Was their patience still exhausted he wondered. Would they that night vote for the Government or against it? Would they withdraw their support from the Government because Sir Antony MacDonnell, who was willing to give them more than sympathy in this matter, still sat on his stool in Dublin Castle?

What a commentary was the whole story on the incapacity of Parliament and of this country to deal successfully with the affairs of another nation. The present Prime Minister in 1888 introduced his three Bills with high-sounding phrases—"the era of neglect was to give place to a policy of kindness and conciliation." The contract of the Union was to be acted upon. Restitution was to be made. In 1886, after the Liberal Party had been defeated on the Home Rule question, Mr. Hanbury came to him and said—

> "I have been reading the history of your country, and I say England cannot tax itself sufficiently to make restitution to you for the destruction of your industries.

Again, the Prime Minister said in 1888—

> "I am bound to say I think we owe something in the nature of an historic debt to Ireland. I think that of all the transactions of which Englishmen and Scotchmen—I do not know that I ought to say Scotchmen, because some of those transactions took place before the Union—have to be ashamed of in their dealings with Ireland, the transactions by which the English Parliament made use of its superiority over Ireland to destroy her budding industries was the most shameful. Bad as the penal laws were, they were the offspring of bigotry and political terror, and the motives that prompted them are elevating as compared with the mean and sordid action of the English Parliament in crushing the Irish industries."

Those Bills of 1888 were then introduced in a spirit of restitution to Ireland. What had become of that policy? The Bann and the Barrow had overflowed their banks full forty times since then, spreading poverty and pestilence throughout the land. Hundreds and thousands of pounds had been dangled before the eyes of the Irish people, but they were

> "Like dead sea-fruits that tempt the eye
> But turn to ashes on the lips,"

ashes of disappointment to the Irish people. Last year when this subject was discussed the then Chief Secretary said they had no money. Were they any better off to-day? When the Union was carried, they claimed to be able to deal with the grievances of Ireland. Had they shown their competence? Had they become bankrupt since 1888 when such large promises were held out to the Irish people? Up to the time the Irish Parliament was destroyed Ireland attended to these matters for herself, and in 1800 when that Government was destroyed she was actually considering this very question. If she had only been allowed to go on in the manner she was then proceeding, if she had only had the use of her own taxation, if she were free from the load of debt incurred for wars in which she had no interest, it was reasonable to suppose that this all-important question would long since have been attended to, and the utter failure of the English Parliament to appreciate the grievance and supply a remedy was its utter condemnation in the mind of every Irishman.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the indifference of the Government for more than a century to the state of the main Irish rivers having resulted in the frequent flooding of large tracts of country, followed by great destruction of property and serious injury to lands and dwellings and to the public health, it is the duty of the Government to devise and carry out a system of drainage which will afford adequate protection for the lives and property of the people."—(*Mr. John O'Connor.*)

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said that there was much in the speeches of both the mover and the seconder with which he could agree. He could not, however, pretend to say much about other parts of Ireland and would confine himself principally to the question of the drainage of the Lough Neagh and River Bann area. An attempt had been made in the past to deal with that question, but he was sorry to say that the state of affairs to-day was almost as bad as it was sixty years ago, before the works were started. Perhaps the House would excuse him if he went rather into detail upon this question. Lough Neagh was the largest lake in the three kingdoms. It was eighteen miles long, and twelve miles broad, and was practically as large as the Isle of Man. There were ten or twelve rivers of considerable size running into Lough Neagh as well as a vast number of smaller streams, and the whole of the water from an immense catchment area of over 1,400,000 acres had to be conveyed to the sea by one single river. The distance from Lough Neagh to the sea was about thirty miles, and the drop was only about forty feet. Consequently, hon. Members would see that the Lower Bann was a more or less slow-flowing river, and it was impossible for the enormous amount of extra water which collected in the Lough in flood time to get through quickly to the sea. This caused the level of the water in Lough Neagh to rise, with the result that the low-lying lands were often seriously flooded.

The nuisance of the flooding and the serious injury it caused was of very old standing. It was not until 1840 that Irishmen interested in the welfare of the North of Ireland could get the Government to move in the matter. Soon after that an Act was passed to promote the drainage of lands and the improvement of navigation, and application was made to the Government by the landowners affected by the flooding of Lough Neagh and the Bann to remedy the evil, and the Commissioners of Public Works, who were also appointed Commissioners for the purpose of the Act, appointed Mr. MacMahon to inspect and report upon the question. He duly inspected and reported thereon and presented plans and specifications for the remedying of the flooding evil, and for the improvement of the navigation. The cost was to be £109,000 for the drainage, and another £74,000 for the navigation. The landowners interested, after mature consideration, decided that the work should be done and that they would bear the cost. But instead of costing £109,000 the total amount spent on the drainage works was £150,000, or £41,000 more than the unfortunate owners had agreed to pay. The works, moreover, took twelve years to complete instead of three. He did not know of any board which had brought down upon its own head more well-deserved abuse than the Board of Works. One of the reasons for the excessive cost—another testimony to the unbusinesslike methods of the Board of Works—was that, instead of giving the contract to a contractor — and large contractors at the time were very numerous—they decided to do the whole of the work themselves, sending down an engineer and numberless assistant engineers, paymasters, clerks, and workmen. Soon after the work was started the famine broke out, and it was thought by the Board of Works and the Government that this would be an excellent opportunity of employing many workmen throughout the country in need of work. A large number of men from various parts of Ireland were therefore collected together for this work. He did not complain of that, but he thought those sharing the cost of the work had reason to complain that on their shoulders should fall the extra cost of £41,000 incurred by employing relief hands and turning a purely business transaction into a philanthropic transaction. Because no contractor was employed, and because this undertaking was used as relief works by the Government, the cost came to £41,000 more than the estimate, and in the year 1880 no less a sum than £166,000 had been paid in principal and interest for these drainage works.

For the first ten years after the works were completed they had more or less the desired effect. But in the subsequent ten years the floods got the upper hand again; and after twenty years and at the present time the state of affairs around the shores of Lough Neagh and on the banks of the Bann was almost as bad as it was fifty or sixty years ago. A large number of Commissions had sat on the subject, and there had been a large number of Reports. His complaint against the Government was that they had been promising and reporting, and holding Select Committees for the last twenty-eight years, and yet nothing had been done. The engineer who prepared the plans and supervised the work was a Government engineer and was not appointed by the owners affected; the work was carried out entirely by the Government, although the cost was borne by the people affected. That being the position, it was the duty of the Government to remedy the defects of their own servant fifty years ago. The original designs and plans made by Mr. MacMahon, the Government engineer, in 1842, when he was reporting, allowed for a discharge capacity of 400,000 cubic feet per minute, but investigations since made proved this was wrong, and that to accomplish the end in view a discharge capacity of 700,000 or 800,000 cubic feet per minute was needed, or double the discharging capacity allowed for in Mr. MacMahon's estimate. That was one of the matters upon which they hoped to get some light. He thought under the circumstances they had a good claim that the whole of these works should be put right at the expense of the Government.

They had had many promises on this subject from the Government and from the late Chief Secretary, and in the year 1903, when he was seeking election, he was distinctly told that he might inform his intended constituents that the matter would be seriously dealt with during the ensuing session. He made free use of that promise, and no doubt many voted for him in the belief that an attempt would be made to relieve their condition. The late Chief Secretary put a thousand pounds on the Development Grant as an earnest of his intentions. But nothing came of that. In March of last year the secretary of the Bann Drainage Committee received a letter from the then Chief Secretary which illustrated exactly the view he, and indeed every Chief Secretary who had had to deal with it, took of this matter. In that letter he stated that the Board of Works had readily complied with Sir Antony MacDonnell's desire that the greatest expedition should be used, in spite of the many and serious claims upon the time of their engineer involved by works executed under the Marine Works Act and other duties of immediate urgency. He maintained that the drainage of the Bann was quite as urgent, and much more urgent, than any work under the Marine Act.

Their complaint in the North of Ireland was that money was spent freely on works in other parts of Ireland which were no more necessary than the rectification of the drainage of the Bann, and that the only part of Ireland which was thoroughly loyal could not, after eighteen years of waiting, get a remedy for an evil which everyone admitted, while hundreds of thousands of pounds were being poured into other parts of Ireland. Much of this money no doubt would be wasted. Ireland was dotted with monuments of the inefficiency of the Board of Works, and all round the coast were harbours on which immense sums had been spent which were practically useless. However, he hoped a better era was beginning to dawn under the reign of the present Chief Secretary. He hoped the Chief Secretary would act differently to his predecessors, who, while promising a great deal, had done nothing at all. The late Chief Secretary appointed Mr. Dick to make a further survey. He would not say anything about Mr. Dick's capacity as an engineer, but, knowing the estimation in which the Board of Works was held, he thought it was an act of folly to appoint this engineer. If his report was thoroughly favourable all, no doubt, would be well, but if it was unfavourable it was certain that the people interested would say, "Oh, this is only the report of the engineer of the Board of Works, and it is not worth the paper it is written on." Considering the amount of feeling that there was on this question, he thought the late Chief Secretary should have avoided sending down any man connected with the Board of Works to make this survey, it would have been far better to have employed an independent engineer, and the Chief Secretary should have taken care in regard to such an appointment that the person appointed was approved of by the people interested. With regard to the last appointment he had not heard that any persons in the locality concerned had been consulted. So far as he could ascertain the facts, Mr. Dick did not make a thorough survey, but he took up the plans of the preceding engineer. The conditions of eighteen years ago were not the conditions of to-day. Farms were now drained in a far superior manner, and the water ran off much quicker. A vast amount of sand and mud must have been deposited in the bed of the river in recent years, and this must have altered the depth of the river in many places. In regard to the appointment of Sir Alexander Binnie, he hoped that the Chief Secretary would see that he made an absolutely independent survey.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): He is not going to make a survey at all; he is only going to present a report.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG said he hoped Sir Alexander Binnie would be definitely instructed to make a thorough survey, and that he would take into consideration the opinions of those living in the locality. Under no circumstances had the Board of Works ever paid any attention to the advice and opinions of the people living on the spot. No matter how eminent an engineer Sir Alexander Binnie might be, he had probably never seen the Bann, and it seemed to him that the men who had suffered so long from this flooding ought to know something about the river. Many of them had their own theories about the cause of flooding, and it would do Sir Alexander Binnie no harm to hear those opinions. Last year the Ulster Unionists voted with Gentlemen opposite on this question, but as the present Chief Secretary had given an earnest of taking action, he and his hon. friends would not vote on the present occasion.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) said the Resolution of his hon. friend the Member for Wicklow which they were engaged in discussing had his earnest and hearty support. Not alone had this Resolution the support of his hon. friends around him, but it had also, he ventured to think, the support and approval of every Irish Member, no matter to what school of political thought he might belong. And why? Because they recognised—and all Irish Members recognised—that the subject dealt with in the Resolution before the House was one of the gravest national importance. It was one of national importance, because the drainage of the rivers of Ireland would affect and beneficially affect numbers of people of all classes and creeds in the country.

This question in its national aspect had been so ably and so exhaustively dealt with by his hon. friends who had preceded him that he would not weary the House with any stale platitudes of his own. He might, however, point out in passing that here was an admitted Irish grievance from which Unionists as well as Nationalists suffered, and which the Government, through the machinery of their numerous Irish boards and departments, could speedily redress. Would they prove themselves equal to the occasion? Would they even now make a beginning and tackle this question which had been so sadly neglected by successive Governments in the past? The Government professed an anxiety to develop Irish resources; they boasted that they were able and willing to do all for Ireland that a native Parliament could do. Let them prove the sincerity of their professions by adopting the Motion of his hon. friend and beginning at once with a scheme for the drainage of Irish rivers. But it was too much to expect that they would do so, notwithstanding the undeniable fact that such a scheme, if adopted and carried out, would be the means of averting periodic famines in many districts, of converting hundreds of thousands of acres, now practically valueless owing to constant overfloodings, into good arable land, and of bringing happiness, if not prosperity, to the doors of thousands of small farmers scattered all over Ireland. There was no doubt but that it would enormously increase the wealth and prosperity of the country. It was a pity, therefore, that a Government which could afford to spend millions on the prosecution of an unjust war in South Africa, and could find money to engage in fruitless expeditions against the Grand Lama and that Will-o'-the-Wisp of the desert, the Mad Mullah, could not furnish a trifle to aid in carrying out a project which would be attended with the happy results he had indicated. The question was one of supreme national moment, and as such should be dealt with in a broad, liberal, and statesmanlike spirit by any Government which wished to keep up the pretence that they were able and anxious to govern Ireland for the benefit of the people and with a view to the material advancement of the interests of the country.

The drainage of the Bann, the Barrow, and the other great rivers in Ireland had been mentioned, and would again be mentioned before the debate closed, and with everything that had been said in regard to these rivers he was in thorough agreement. He hoped, however, that he might be pardoned if he mentioned the case of the negligence of the Government in regard to the drainage of the Owenmore in the county of Sligo. Attempts had been made from time to time, in one shape or other, to do something for the drainage of the other great rivers, but although the people of South Sligo in the poor province of Connaught had been agitating and asking some aid from the Government for the drainage of this river during the past sixty years, a deaf ear had always been turned to their demands for justice and fair play. The Owenmore was not a navigable river. It took its rise in a scheduled congested district, and flowed for a considerable distance through that district, continued its course through South Sligo, and owing to its crooked course and choked condition was liable to periodical flooding. This meant ruin to the hundreds of small farmers inhabiting the valley through which it flowed; last year the drainage caused by these floods was so great that a great public meeting was held in Ballymote in August last, presided over by the very rev. Canon Loftus, and attended by clergymen and magistrates of all denominations. Strong resolutions were adopted, but nothing had been done.

In 1847, the year of the famine, an estimate was made for the drainage of this river by the then county surveyor. It was estimated that 8,000 acres could be reclaimed at an outlay of £7,000, but the Government of that day spent the money in relief works elsewhere and the work was abandoned. In 1879 another effort was made to institute a scheme for the drainage of this river, but the landlord's consent could not be obtained, and the scheme once more fell through. In 1895 the Liberal Government was approached, and they were inclined to give a grant, but they left office immediately after, and their benevolent intentions were not followed up by their successors. Again, in 1896, a great meeting of all creeds and classes was held in Ballymote. This meeting was presided over by Colonel Cooper, the lord-lieutenant of the county, a Unionist landlord, and a firm supporter of the Government of that day. A memorial was adopted praying for a grant-in-aid, but the usual stereotyped answer was returned, "No money available." There were in Ireland, the Congested Districts Board, the Department of Agriculture, and many other Departments too numerous to mention. This river flowed through three scheduled congested districts, and its drainage would mean the reclamation of 8,000 acres of land, now practically valueless, but what had the Congested Districts Board or the Department of Agriculture done in the matter? Nothing! Was it too much to expect that even now at the eleventh hour the Government would open its eyes and give financial aid and encouragement to a scheme which would be productive of so much good? There was a free grant given towards the drainage of the Suck some years ago. It was given, as was stated, under exceptional circumstances.

There were exceptional circumstances here also, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would hearken to the appeal he made on behalf of the poor people of his constituency, and give a helping hand in the direction of having this river drained. By doing so he would be helping in a measure to repair the neglect of the past.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) pointed out that this question had been considered by two Commissions —the Viceregal Commission of 1885, and the Royal Commission on Public Works in Ireland of 1887—both of which reported strongly in favour of a scheme of drainage for the Barrow. On the strength of those Reports the present Prime Minister, then Chief Secretary for Ireland, introduced a Bill in 1888. That measure was not proceeded with. In the following session he introduced a more comprehensive Bill, proposing to carry out works on the Barrow to the extent of £360,000, of which £215,000 was to be a free grant, and the remainder raised on the improved land within the riparian area. That Bill did not pass, and since then nothing whatever had been done. But the matter had not stood still; the evil had gone on increasing, and the need for action became more urgent every day. Several times in the year the people in the districts affected had to leave their homes in the poorer quarters, some having to be rescued by means of ambulances for which the guardians had to pay, some went to the workhouse and others to their friends, and then when the floods abated they returned to their miserable homes. It was impossible to understand how they existed. Disease was promoted, and epidemics might be expected at any time. He hoped the Chief Secretary would make some practical answer that night. Personally, he did not approve of the suggestion for the establishment of another department in Ireland; there were too many departments already. Nor did he approve of the work being given to the Board of Works; there were all over the country too many monuments of the stupidity and incapacity of that department. What he suggested was that committees of the county councils should be entrusted with the work. If money and machinery were put into their hands he believed that the confidence in their capacity would be amply and fully justified.

The CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) said that before dealing with the main question he might refer to a comparatively small matter which had been raised in the debate, viz., the circumstances under which Sir Alexander Binnie had been appointed to report on river drainage in Ireland. Hon. Members were under a misapprehension. The local drainage board was consulted in the appointment of Sir Alexander Binnie, and that gentleman had a perfectly free hand to make what surveys and examinations he thought necessary in order that he might furnish a report which, he hoped, might prove a valuable one. He understood, however, from the debate that what hon. Members opposite wanted was not further investigation, but immediate action. Probably the most practical speech in the debate was that made by the hon. Member who spoke last, and he had suggested that committees of the county councils should do the work. That was a practical suggestion with which he would deal later. The Motion was one in which fault was found with the Governments of the last 100 years for neglecting arterial drainage in Ireland, but the mover and seconder of the Motion had urged the necessity, not so much of dealing with arterial drainage, as of making these rivers into waterways.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): You cannot make a waterway of the Upper Barrow.

MR. WALTER LONG said the short but pertinent interruption of the hon. Member disposed of the greater portion of the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Motion. The £2,500,000 spent on arterial drainage in Ireland had been contrasted with the many millions spent in Holland. But the latter was a question not of arterial drainage but of waterways. Those two questions must be dealt with separately. What he understood was wanted was that the evils which arose from the overflowing of these rivers should be dealt with. That was a question solely of arterial drainage. So far as the Bann and the Barrow were concerned he was afraid that there could be no doubt that from time to time immense damage to property resulted from the present condition of these rivers. It was undoubtedly the case that if rivers overflowed in an agricultural district not only were fields and houses submerged, but there must be serious injury to the industry of the district. It had been said that everything that had been done hitherto had been wrongly done. While he did not wish to absolve the Irish Government and the Board of Works from all responsibility and all blame, he thought they were not as much to blame as hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to think. They had consulted local opinion to a greater extent than they had been given credit for, and many of the evils of which complaint had been made were due to the fact that they had taken so much advice that they had in the long run taken a course which had resulted in the least benefit to the district which they desired to serve. Undoubtedly they had consulted local opinion, but it was the unanimous feeling that the guiding opinion had been a mistaken one. The result had been unsatisfactory.

The boards under the existing Acts were obviously out of keeping with the present time. This was not a general debate on Irish government—the river boards dealing with these rivers were out of date, and owing to the changes in land tenure the formation of those boards became more difficult every year. A suggestion had been made to transfer the powers to a committee of county councils, and in England legislation had set up joint committees of contiguous counties to deal with pollution of rivers, but the difficulty of dealing with flooding was quite different to that of dealing with pollution, and more information was required. ["No, no!"] There was necessity for reform; the present condition of things could not continue, but a procedure must be found to bring about a systematic and successful result.

*MR. JOHN O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary if he remembered an Answer which he gave to him, probably about a week ago, in reply to a Question on the Paper as to whether the Government was prepared to introduce a Bill extending the provisions of Section 20 so as to establish joint boards of county councils in respect of the rivers flowing through their respective districts. Was he now prepared to promise them a short Bill?

MR. WALTER LONG said he was quite willing to consider such a suggestion, but he was afraid this would not be sufficient. More advice was required, and there must be co-operation in the dealing with the upper and lower parts of a river; the difficulties in the one and in the other part were different and required different remedies. More information was wanted as to the best way to deal with some of these difficulties, and he believed that the best course to adopt would be to have a short examination by three experts, one an engineer, and two experts connected with local government. He believed that after an examination of that kind they might get a reform of the Local Government Act of 1898, and with such additional powers they might be able to deal with the question satisfactorily. After that any additional money granted might be wisely spent. That was the conclusion he had arrived at, and if his suggestion was acceptable to both sides he would undertake the appointment of such a Committee without any delay, and he did not think it would take very long to make a practical Report upon the whole question.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said the speech they had just listened to was an exact counterpart of many speeches they had heard on Irish subjects from successive Irish Governments. Of course the right hon. Gentleman was able to plead that his knowledge of the question was small and that he had had very little time to look into it. He supposed, however, that he had consulted those who were conversant with it, and yet he had made no definite proposal whatever. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted a grievance which had been in existence for generations, and then he threw out vague suggestions as to the possibility of amending the Local Government Act.

MR. WALTER LONG: What I said was that while I favoured the extension of Section 20 of the Act of 1898 I did not believe that it would cover the ground.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that what the right hon. Gentleman did was to throw out that suggestion, and then he added that he did not pin himself to it. The suggestion as to the appointment of a small Committee was a most extraordinary one, and he declined to take any share of the responsibility for it. He saw no reason for any further inquiry, and if the right hon. Gentleman had come to a settled conclusion on the subject he should act on his own opinion and appoint the inquiry. The constitution of the proposed Committee was absurd, and he wanted to know who the local government experts were to be. The right hon. Gentleman sugggested that this Committee should consist of an eminent engineer and two local government officials.

MR. WALTER LONG: I never used the word "officials." I said experts.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said he should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman meant by experts.

MR. WALTER LONG said that they would be men experienced in the affairs of local government, but not officers connected with the Government.

MR. JOHN REDMOND invited the right hon. Gentleman to come to some definite conclusion on the question, and asked whether these experts were to be selected by the county councils in Ireland or whether they were to be men sent over from England. Until the right hon. Gentleman gave some more definite statement he should take no responsibility whatever for the suggestion he had made. The right hon. Gentleman had not met their case, and in these circumstances he hoped his hon. friend would go to a division.

MR. KILBRIDE pointed out that an extension of Section 20 would not deal with this difficulty, because what suited the upper reaches of the river would not suit the lower reaches. It might apply all right to the Shannon and the Bann, but it had no application to the Barrow. A conference of the county councils concerned was held a few months ago and they came to the conclusion that a joint board should be formed, consisting of the representatives of the county councils of the counties through which the river flowed, to deal with the whole question of the drainage of the Barrow. One would imagine from the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman that the Government had done something to improve the condition of the River Barrow, but as a matter of fact they had never spent one penny on the drainage of that river. The bed of the river had become silted up, and obstructions years ago had been allowed to be constructed across the river; and if the county councils were only given power to remove those obstructions by levying a very small rate on the areas affected they could relieve the flooding to a very large extent. Unless something was done the farmers and inhabitants of those areas would be very seriously affected. Frequently the houses were flooded, and the health of the people had suffered considerably. He hoped something would be done to deal with the upper reaches of the River Barrow, and if the Government would not do anything, at least they might give the localities power to do it themselves.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) called attention to what he regarded as a serious omission in the Chief Secretary's statement, in that he had given no hint as to whether the Government contemplated providing any money for the operation. As no hope had been held out that any money would be provided for this purpose he hoped they would proceed to a division.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 79; Noes, 120. Division List No. 189.)

AYES.

Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Hammond, John
Hardie, J Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire

Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfred (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Crae, George
M‘Fadden, Edward
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan,Col.JohnP. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen,AugustusHenry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour,Rt.Hn.GeraldW.(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes,RtHnAilwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster,PhilipS.(Warwick, S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marq.of (L'donderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford,W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hoult, Joseph
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence,SirJoseph(Monm'th)
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N S.
Long,RtHon.Walter(Bristol,S)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Macdona, John Cumming
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Iver,SirLewis(Edinburgh W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott(Hants.)
Morgan,David J(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord(Lancs.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Welby,Lt-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton)
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wortley, Rt.Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 25th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Morley Corporation Bill; Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.]; Brentwood Gas Bill; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]; North Sussex Gas Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Clifford of Chudleigh be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Hare (*E. Listowel*); read, and agreed to.

Ealing Corporation Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on Thursday and Friday last discharged, and Bill committed.

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Read 2ª, and committed.

Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Seaham Gas Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow, and not to sit on Monday next till half-past Twelve o'clock.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow.

Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

PETITIONS.

Intoxicating Liquors (Hours of Closing) Bill [H.L.]. Petitions in favour of; of the London Auxiliary of the United Kingdom Alliance; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CERTIFIED INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (SCOTLAND).

General regulations for the management and discipline of certified inebriate reformatories in Scotland.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Deputy-Keeper of the Public Records.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Returns of cases of derailment of engines of passenger trains into which inquiries have been held by the inspecting officers of railways during the twenty years ended 31st December, 1904, divided into (1) tank engines, and (2) tender engines, showing in each case the date, place of accident, and railway, and the class of engine.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF DURHAM).

Order made by the county council of the county of Durham, altering certain polling districts. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARUNDEL PORT.

Account and Report for 1904–1905. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, it would be convenient if the noble Marquess the Leader of the House could inform us what arrangements he proposes to make for the Whitsuntide holidays.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the noble Earl has allowed me to discuss this matter privately with him, and I have consulted other Members of the House. I propose that we should sit until the Friday before Whit Sunday, that the business of the House should be interrupted for a fortnight, which is, I believe, the usual time, and that we should reassemble on Monday, June 26th.

EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, a Convention has been concluded between His Majesty and the President of the United States for including in the list of crimes on account of which extradition may be granted certain offences, and, amongst others, bribery; and it is provided by the Convention that it shall come into force within ten days after publication in conformity with the laws of the high contracting parties. Bribery is not at present included in the list of crimes in the First Schedule to the Extradition Act, 1870, and the Convention cannot be published in conformity with the laws of the United Kingdom until bribery is so included. This Bill, therefore, enacts that the Extradition Act, 1870, shall be construed as if bribery were included in the list of crimes in the First Schedule to that Act. I think your Lordships will agree that it is highly desirable that effect should be given to the agreement which has been come to between the two countries.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDALS BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, the two Amendments standing in my name have been drafted in accordance with the request made at the previous stage by the noble Lord behind me, Lord Muskerry, who pointed out that there was a certain medal which he did not think was covered by the Bill. It was certainly our object that the Bill should cover such a medal, and I beg to move these Amendments to make that clear.

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 6, after the word 'issued' to insert the words 'by His Majesty'; and in line 7, after the word 'forces' to insert the words 'or any other persons'."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 88.)

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, this Bill proposes various reforms in legal administration in Ireland, which are considered by those most concerned as likely to be useful and advantageous and to greatly simplify matters. The first provision in the Bill is one to enable the hearing and dispatch at any winter assizes of any civil business other than traverses. It was found that owing to the construction of some of the statutes it was necessary that the transaction of civil business at winter assizes should be authorised in this way by Parliament. The next provision is to regulate future appointments in the Principal Registry of the Probate and Matrimonial Branch of the King's Bench Division, and to provide that junior clerkships, like those in other divisions, shall be filled by open competition. There is also a provision with regard to the extension of powers to make rules of Court which places this matter on a satisfactory basis. Provision, too, is made for appointments in the Registration of T.the Officer. There is also an attempt—a successful one, I believe it will be—to remedy in this Bill a mistake that was made in the Statute Law Revision Act, 1893. No matter how carefully that work is done sometimes a slip may be made, and in the particular matter dealt with in this Bill an error was committed, and we seek in this Bill to set that matter right. There is also a proposal to remove a grievance in the matter of the constitution of local election Courts. It has been found that the selection of the barrister who was to try the matter was hampered owing to the technicalities surrounding the appointment, and that matter is sought to be put right in this Bill. I hope your Lordships will see no difficulty in granting the Bill a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Ashbourne.*)

On Question Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

DISLOYALTY OF IRISH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government whether it is a fact that at the annual dinner in connection with the Irish National Teachers' Association, held at Sligo on 26th April, a certain number of teachers left the room when the health of His Majesty the King was proposed, and many others refused to rise from their seats to honour the toast; and whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to take any steps to prevent such teachers from inculcating disloyalty among the children who attend their schools.

I do not intend to detain your Lordships at any length, but I make no excuse for bringing this matter forward, believing as I do that it is one which may fitly engage the attention of your Lordships' House and the serious consideration of the people of this country. There is no subject to which public attention has been more closely directed during the last few years than that of education. We have been almost led to believe that in education we shall find a panacea for all the ills to which human flesh is heir, and it is not astonishing that on a subject of such importance we find many differences of opinion. There are some who hold that our system of education has been so improved and brought up to date that it is adapted to meet the requirements of the present generation. There are others who tell us that we have still much to learn from what is being done in foreign countries. There are those who hold that children should be brought up in the faith of their fathers, but there are others who would limit their religious instruction to such portions of Christian faith as recommend themselves to the conscience of Mr. Lloyd-George. But, my Lords, however great the difference may be on all these subjects, there is one point on which all parties in this country are agreed, which will recommend itself equally to the heads of the Roman Catholic Heirarchy and to the most extreme Welsh dissenters, to the right rev. bench and to the leaders of agnosticism, and that is that all the children of this country should be taught to take a pride in the history of the English race, with a confidence in the future of the British Empire and with a loyalty to the gracious Sovereign under whose benignant sway we enjoy a security and a freedom which make us the envy of many foreign nations.

Very different, I regret to say, is the state of feeling across St. George's Channel. Owing to religious differences very little history can be taught, and what little is taught appears to me to consist mainly of a collection of fairy tales of doughty deeds wrought by Erse robber chiefs, who are dignified by the name of Kings and who one by one succumbed to the advance of the hated Saxon. Everywhere you find that England is regarded as the oppressor of Ireland, and England is represented by England's King. I am sure that those noble Lords who hail from the sister Isle will agree with me when I say that we heard of the behaviour of the Irish national teachers at Sligo with more sorrow than surprise. It grieves us, it fills us with resentment, but it causes no astonishment. We are only too accustomed to the rampant disloyalty of our Nationalist fellow-countrymen. We know that throughout three provinces of Ireland there is hardly an assembly of any kind at which the King's health is proposed. We know that many of the public bodies have had the words, "On His Majesty's Service" removed from their paper and the words "On the Public Service" inscribed in their stead. Worse than that, we know that in many places a black flag was hoisted on the public buildings on the occasion of His Majesty's Coronation; and so I say that though we grieve at this new instance of disloyalty we cannot profess to be surprised at it.

We are often told in England that the Nationalists of Ireland are perfectly loyal, that all they are anxious to obtain is some extension of local government, the right to manage their own as apart from Imperial affairs. But, my Lords, we who live in Ireland know that this is not the case. The words "Loyalist" and "Nationalist" are not interchangeable terms, and the very *fons et origo* of the demand for Home Rule lies in hatred of England. We are all aware, if I may say so with all respect, that our gracious Sovereigns win golden opinions wherever they go, and Ireland was no exception to the rule. Those with whom they came in contact fell under the magnetic charm, but, after all, the opinions of a life-time are, I fear, not done away with in a moment, and the inborn dislike of this country overcomes ere long all transient impressions. My Lords, if a proof is needed of the truth of my statements, can a better one be found than in the conduct of these national school teachers at the dinner at Sligo? These are no ignorant peasants, blindly led astray by agitators; these are men who have been carefully trained at the expense of the State to teach the coming generation of Irishmen. These men are officials of the State; they are not paid by local bodies. I wish I could inpress this fact on every taxpayer in England and Scotland. It is with their money that these men are paid to inculcate disloyalty among the children of Ireland. For can we doubt that they do teach it?

I do not for a moment accuse every Nationalist schoolmaster in Ireland of disloyalty. I am glad to say that I believe there are many notable exceptions, but, if you wish to know their view as a body, how can it be better judged than at a dinner held on the occasion of their annual conference? "By their fruits ye shall know them." Teachers now in active employment and in receipt of Government pay may not be very anxious openly to express their views; but may I quote to your Lordships the words of Mr. Seumas Macmanus, for some time a national teacher, in a letter to the *Irish Independent*, extracts from which appeared in *The Times* of May 16th. Mr. Macmanus, writing with reference to the custom of drinking the King's health, says that—

> "The custom has been tolerated too long in Ireland and it is the duty of every Irishman to make active protest."

Mr. Macmanus defends the national school teachers who refused to honour the loyal toast at Sligo, and continues—

> "The Irish youth who quits school without realising his duties as a rebel is, or should be, a discredit to his schoolmaster as well as to his country."

Mr. Macmanus was himself a national teacher for some years, and he says that during that time his salary was well earned—

> "So far, at least, as the stirring of discontent and the dissemination of rebellious opinions were concerned."

Does not this disclose a serious state of affairs? Does not this call for a remedy?

I ask His Majesty's Government what they are prepared to do. I cannot venture to advise them. The education of the children of Ireland ought, it appears to me, to be made a powerful factor in the pacification of the country. Unless you have a loyal population you will never have a reconciled Ireland. We see that nowadays these children are being trained as "rebels," and I personally believe that this is being greatly helped by the assistance which is being given in national schools, out of Imperial funds, to revive the long-disused Gaelic language, which is of no earthly practical use to anybody in the world, and which is only made use of by agitation for the purpose of fostering an anti-British feeling. I acknowledge that the task of His Majesty's Government is no easy one, and that drastic measures may, perhaps, be worse than none at all; but surely some means might be taken to encourage loyalty in the training colleges where these teachers receive their education, and it might be made compulsory for the National Anthem to be taught and sung in all national schools. We are told that we must do our best to propitiate Irish feeling, but in this case English and Scottish feeling must also be considered, for it is with English and Scottish money that these schools are supported, and these teachers are paid. I beg to put the Question which stands in my name.

*THE EARL OF ARRAN: My Lords, I venture to trespass on your attention in order to supplement the Question which has been asked by my noble friend. The noble Lord dwelt very fully on the incident as it is reported in the newspapers, and he also commented, very rightly, on the peculiar circumstances that attach to this incident, in that these men accused of disloyalty are schoolmasters having the charge of the future generation of Irishmen in their hands. I think your Lordships will agree with me that youth is the most impressionable part of one's life. The ideas that are imbued in a child are the ideas that remain longer than any other; they are the most deep-rooted and the most difficult to eradicate. We had an object-lesson in South Africa, where I was told over and over again by different Boers that one of the reasons for the great feeling of hatred towards England and the English race was that Dutch-speaking children from their very earliest years were taught in their schools to hate England and the English. Here, if the circumstances are as we are given to understand they are by the Press, we have the very same thing happening at our very door, or, I may say, in our own house. Whatever one's politics may be, whether one be a strong advocate of the policy of Home Rule or an enthusiastic Unionist, as I am, no one can approve of such action as these schoolmasters are accused of.

The noble Lord who called attention to this question said he would not venture to make any suggestion to His Majesty's Government, but I am going to suggest that they should make full inquiry into this remarkable incident, if only in order that these schoolmasters may have an opportunity of clearing their characters from the serious accusation that has been made. Those who live in Ireland will agree with me that Irishmen are easily led in this matter. In this country a Hyde Park orator may make a speech and say, "Let's go and blow up St. Paul's,' but no one takes any notice of him, and St. Paul's remains. But it is not so in Ireland. Unless notice is taken of inflammatory speeches and strong Government disapproval shown, it is attributed, in the South and West of Ireland at any rate, not to a policy of clemency but to weakness. I venture most sincerely to hope that we shall hear from His Majesty's Government that they have taken, are taking, or will take, such measures as will lead to full inquiry being made into this incident; land if, unhappily, the accusation is proved to be true, then the schoolmasters should be removed from the positions which by such action they have proved themselves unworthy of filling.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I disagree with the noble Lord who called attention to this question, for I do not think that hatred of England is really implanted in the hearts of most of my countrymen. They extend a hearty welcome to English tourists, and I do not think there is really any hatred in Ireland of the "brutal Saxon." Hatred of England does not lie at the root of disloyal demonstrations. The real secret is that these people have found that by agitation, disloyal speeches, and the like, the Government will give in to them, and they will get what they want.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, the three noble Lords who have spoken are thoroughly acquainted with Ireland and perfectly qualified to speak on the subject. I confess I followed the speech of my noble friend who put this Question with a certain amount of difficulty. I could not quite gather whether he expected me to defend the Board of Education from the attacks of Mr. Lloyd-George or confine myself entirely to the Question on the Paper. If he will allow me, I will deal with the Question on the Paper, for I shall have many opportunities in the future of alluding to Mr. Lloyd-George and his line of policy in regard to education in England and Wales. I am certain that the action of those teachers to which the noble Lord has referred will be disapproved by every Member of your Lordships' House, and I was glad to hear from the noble Earl opposite (Lord Arran) that they will be glad to have the opportunity of clearing their characters from the serious accusation that has been made.

THE EARL OF ARRAN: All I stated was that I hoped His Majesty's Government would give them an opportunity of doing so.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I gathered from what the noble Earl said that if they were given an opportunity of clearing themselves they would gladly do so.

THE EARL OF ARRAN: I have no reason to suppose that they will be able to clear themselves; but it was natural to imagine that, being servants of the Crown, they would be glad of an opportunity of clearing themselves if they could.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Nothing would give me greater pleasure personally than that they should be able to do so. Such action represents the feeling of only a very small minority of the people in Ireland, the vast majority of whom regard the name of Their Sovereign not only with respect but with affection since the visit of Their Majesties to Ireland and their manifestation of interest in the industries and welfare of that country. It is extremely difficult for the Government to obtain information of what really took place at the banquet in question. The only information we have at present is the report in the *Sligo Champion*, and from the wording of the Question of the noble Lord I have no doubt that it is couched in terms drawn from that journal. I gather from this journal that a number of the invited guests, including some clergymen, having observed that the first toast on the printed programme was that of "The King," decided to leave immediately, and they did so, being unwilling to participate in a function where the toast was a feature. I understand that the toast was actually proposed, when, it appears, the majority of those present, guests and congress delegates, remained seated. That is all the information we have been able to obtain, and I cannot gather from the Press or from any other source of information that any speech was delivered by any of these people. Mr. Macmanus, to whom the noble Lord referred, is no longer a teacher.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: I stated that he was no longer a teacher; but he described what he used to do when he was a teacher and under the control of the Education Department.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: He is no longer a teacher. If he had been we should have known how to deal with him, and we should have dealt with him. But, as he is no longer a teacher, he is not under the control of the Irish Government. The Government referred the matter to the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for inquiry, and they have reported that they have no information which would justify them in taking any action and that they have no means of obtaining such information. Noble Lords opposite laugh, but I do not quite know how the Government are to obtain information by any other means than through the local paper. His Majesty's Government feel as strongly as any noble Lord in this House that it is, and must be, absolutely disastrous to the interests of the rising generation if they are allowed to have inculcated in their minds feelings of disloyalty, and if it can be shown that any teacher is inculcating such feelings we will take the earliest opportunity of going into the matter and of seeing that that course of action is not repeated.

THE EARL OF MAYO: My Lords, with all respect to the noble Marquess, I cannot refrain from expressing my strong opinion that there are means of obtaining this information if the Government had desired to avail themselves of them. We all know how information is secured in Ireland; it is obtained very easily, and I do not think it is at all satisfactory that Questions asked by noble Lords from Ireland should be anwered in this way. The information could be obtained more easily by His Majesty's Government than by private individuals. When there are cases of alleged crime the Government find no difficulty whatever in obtaining information, and I contend that it is their bounden duty in cases of this kind, when asked for information, to take the means they have in their power of obtaining that information.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND: I should like to ask who was the chairman of the meeting, and whether any question has been addressed to him as to what occurred.

THE EARL OF MAYO: The name of the chairman is in the local paper.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I find that the chairman is here stated to be Mr. Hazlett, M.A., president of the organisation.

VICOUNT GOSCHEN: I agree with the noble Duke beside me that the chairman of the meeting should be asked for an explanation. If a question were addressed to the chairman we would be able to discover whether this incident occurred. If there is a general feeling of loyalty among those teachers they will be able to repudiate it and to furnish the Government with the necessary reply to the charge.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I think that suggestion is a practical one, and, without pledging myself in any way, I will communicate with the Chief Secretary and ask him whether a question might not be addressed to the chairman for the purpose of obtaining further information.

THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE.

*THE EARL OF DARTREY rose to call attention to the United Irish League meeting at Scotshouse, county Monaghan, on Sunday, the seventh of this month, at which an inflammatory address, suggesting outrage and murder, is stated to have been delivered; and to ask what steps His Majesty's Government propose to take in consequence. He said: My Lords, I desire to call the attention of your Lordships' House to the recent proceedings of the United Irish League in the county in which I live, because from the accounts that have reached me they appear to have been of a very remarkable character. The meeting to which I refer took place on Sunday, the 7th instant, at Scotshouse, county Monagan. It does not appear to have been advertised beforehand, which possibly accounts for the local police sergeant knowing nothing about it; indeed, when the meeting commenced he was absent in a neighbouring town on other business, but I believe he got back in time to hear a good deal of what passed at the meeting. Much may be learnt from the Press reports. I may especially refer to two Nationalist papers—the *Dundalk Democrat* and the *Anglo-Celt.* From these I learn that—

> "At last Mass it (the meeting) was announced from the puplit by Mr. McElroy, the parish priest, who called on the people to attend and hear the advice which would be given them by Mr. Lynam, organiser, who was present as the accredited representative of the Irish Parliamentary Party."

I had better begin with an incident, perhaps trivial in itself, but which gained importance from the way it was used. As the proceedings were about to commence, according to the *Anglo-Celt*—

> "Mr. J. C. Madden, of Hilton Park"—Hilton Park adjoins the village of Scotshouse—"who was one of the congregation coming out of the Protestant church, pushed his way through the crowd and complained to Father McElroy that the band playing had caused annoyance to the congregation in the Protestant church."

I may at once say I have seen Mr. Madden, who denies having pushed his way at all; the crowd was not dense, and he walked through gaps in it. On a previous occasion—Christmas, 1903—he had complained to Mr. McElroy of noise outside the Protestant church during service, and then received from him an extremely civil reply, so he had no reason to expect anything else on this occasion. Having complained, Mr. Madden retired. I do not wish to say anything against Mr. McElroy.

I pass on now to the principal speech delivered at the meeting. The speaker, Mr. Lynam, appears to have employed the incident I have related as an excuse for using specially violent language about Mr. Madden in the course of his torrent of invective against landlords generally. However, if he had confined himself to abuse, misrepresentation, and slander about landlords, those might hardly be grounds sufficiently tangible for the authorities to be justified in interfering, but in the middle of all this he expressed his opinion that—

> "All the compensation the landlords of this country are entitled to is three yards of a hempen rope."

and I submit that in so saying he went very near indeed to counselling and advising wholesale murder, if, indeed, he was not actually doing so. Denunciation and abuse of landlords seem to have been the main purport of the earlier part of his speech, and I need not trouble your Lordships with further details on that point. But as he got further on he appears to have warmed to his work, and after telling his hearers that no concessions had ever been obtained from the British Government except by outrages or threats of outrages he proceeded to say that—

> "A few barrels of powder laid up against Clerkenwell Prison blew up the whole Protestant Church in Ireland!"

and shortly afterwards he is represented as saying that—

> "He was not approving of crime, but most of them were aware that it was the shooting of some eleven or twelve landlords in certain parts that got them the Land Act of 1881. He did not, however, advise his hearers to take any such measures."

Here we have this man, the accredited representative of the Irish Parliamentary Party, holding forth on the advantages which he said had ensued in the past from a policy of murder and outrage, no doubt qualifying his statements by saying that he did not advise his hearers to resort to such measures. But where is the practical value of such qualifications, or a dozen such, just after he had alluded to crimes as useful acts and likely to conduce to the realisation of their desires? and that in a harangue which was obviously an appeal to the passions of an excitable populace whom we have every reason to believe to be in no way disinclined to commit lawless acts.

It should be remembered that the object of Mr. Lynam's presence on this occasion was avowedly to reorganise the local branch of the United Irish League, which was done by enrolling members, collecting subscriptions, appointing officers, and arranging for a subsequent meeting to be held on Sunday last. Whether it has been held or what may have occurred, I have not yet heard. It is possible that His Majesty's Government may know more about it than I do. The gentle methods of the United Irish League are only too well known—they are much the same as those of the Land League of a few years ago, of which, in fact, it is really a resuscitation under a new name; and how soon may we expect some of these methods, *i.e.*, outrage and murder, to be put in practice in the neighbourhoods—unless threats and intimidation have already produced implicit obedience to the orders and laws of the league? I would therefore submit that this meeting alone gives ample and sufficient grounds for proclaiming the United Irish League as an illegal association and for suppressing it. I would further ask if general orders could not be given to the police at all times to prevent and disperse any meeting or any noisy or disorderly concourse near a place of worship where Divine service is going on, which might in any way disturb the services then in progress?

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, the noble Earl has stated the facts accurately. It is quite true that Mr. Lynam used very uncomplimentary language with regard to Captain Madden, but the noble Earl opposite who has been Viceroy of Ireland, together with the Prime Minister and myself, have been made the subject of denunciation at the hands of various Nationalists, in comparison with which the remarks of Mr. Lynam with reference to Captain Madden were as water unto wine. I certainly think that Mr. Lynam's speech was most unfortunate. The noble Earl asked whether it was the intention of the Irish Government to prosecute Mr. Lynam, but they could not do so on legal grounds, the reason being that he protected himself by saying that the league denounced outrage of every description, and that their policy was one of constitutional agitation.

*THE EARL OF DARTREY: During the greater part of his speech Mr. Lynam seems to have dwelt on the advantages of crime and outrage.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I have no desire to defend the speech, and I would be glad to see those who make such speeches brought to book and placed in the dock; but to do that you must have a good case, and I am afraid that this case is not strong enough. With regard to the inconvenience of the bands playing within such a short distance of the church, I am informed that at a meeting held in the vestry, at which Captain Madden was present, it was agreed that there was no intention of disturbing the service and therefore that no action should be taken. In view of that resolution, how could the Government interfere in the matter? The noble Earl has rightly called attention to Mr. Lynam's violent language. But he knows as well as I do that the policy of the professional agitator in Ireland is only one of blather, and that his only object is to retain his position as agitator. This is the first time I have heard of Mr. Lynam, but from reading his speech I imagine that he is only one of those professional agitators of whom Ireland has far too many. Certainly care will be taken that the power of the United Irish League does not increase; and the House may rely on it that the present Chief Secretary will insist on law and order being upheld. I may add that I personally would not remain a member of the Government if that policy was not carried out.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I would only observe that it seems to me that the blather of the Irish agitator has been very successful. All Loyalists in Ireland hope and expect that the new Chief Secretary will bring about a change—and a change for the better.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, to to-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 25*th May*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

CANALS BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 22nd day of this instant May, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have not been complied with, viz. :—Canals Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Wrexham Gas Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

London and North Western Railway Bill (King's Consent signified). Read the third time, and passed.

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Milton-next-Sittingbourne, Sittingbourne and Milton (Rural), and the Enfield and Edmonton Joint Hospital District," presented by Mr. Grant Lawson; supported by Mr. Gerald Balfour; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 228.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments [Scheme confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday, 5th June.

Midland Railway Bill; Caledonian Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—South Suburban Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill, without Amendment.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill, with an Amendment.

Amendments to—Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the granting of Superannuation Allowances to the Officers and Servants of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Stepney; and for other purposes." [Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to the Tees Valley Water Board, and to confer further borrowing and other powers on the Tees Valley Water Board." [Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to incorporate a board of trustees, and to authorise them to acquire the Workington Harbour and Lonsdale Dock undertaking, in the county of Cumberland; and to construct an extension pier at Workington; and for other purposes." [Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Hythe to construct additional waterworks; to make further provision for the improvement of the borough; and for other purposes." [Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords]; Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [Lords]; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.

Petitions from Aberdeen, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Northfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

Petition from Aberdeen, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITIA (SERVICE OUTSIDE UNITED KINGDOM).

Return [presented 24th May] to be printed. [No. 172.]

INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (SCOTLAND) (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of General Regulations for the management and discipline of certified Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Cases of Derailment of Engines of Passenger Trains into which Inquiries have been held by the Inspecting Officers of Railways, during the twenty years ending 31st December, 1904, divided into—I. Tank Engines, and II. Tender Engines, showing in each case the Date, place of Accident, and Railway, and the Class of Engine [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOROUGHS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (OUTSTANDING LOANS).

Return ordered, "giving the names of the Boroughs in England and Wales, the Councils of which, on the 31st day of March, 1905, had Outstanding Loans raised in sums not exceeding £100, otherwise than by the issue of stock, and giving particulars respecting such Loans in the following form:—

	Loans raised in sums not exceeding £100 otherwise than by the issue of stock.													Amount standing to the credit, on the 31st day of March, 1905, of sinking funds or other funds provided for the repayment of these Outstanding Loans.			
	Loans secured on mortgage of rates or funds administered by the Council, or of any land, works, or other property belonging to them.						Other Loans raised as above mentioned.					Total amount outstanding on the 31st day of March, 1905.					
	Minimum amount which the Council—						Minimum amount which the Council—										
Name of Borough.	were prepared to accept.	actually received.	Rate or rates of interest payable.	Period for which borrowed.	Number of persons holding these mortgages.	In what manner and on what security borrowed.	were prepared to accept.	actually received.	Rate or rates of interest payable.	Period for which borrowed or terms on which repayment is to be made of sums borrowed.	Number of persons from whom the Council had received these Loans in sums not exceeding £100.	Loans secured on mortgage.	Other Loans.	Loans secured on mortgage.	Other Loans.	Were the sums borrowed applied to purposes for which the Council had been duly authorised to raise Loans, and, if not, how were they used?	Remarks.
1	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.
	£	£	£ per cent				£	£	£ per cent			£	£	£	£		

—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).

Address for "Return of the net Income and Expenditure of British India under certain specific heads for the eleven years from 1893–4 to 1903–4 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 168, of Session 1904)." (*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Fall in Price of Sugar—Suggested Reduction of Import Duty.

COLONEL SADLER (Middlesbrough): To ask Mr. Chancellar of the Exchequer if his attention has been directed to the fall in the price of sugar, to-day's value being 5s. per cwt. below what it was in January last, whilst new crop sugar is quoted at under 10s. per cwt., or less than one penny per pound; and whether, having regard to the relative rate of the duty to the total value of sugar when it was imposed, he will favourably consider a *pro rata* reduction.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Yes, Sir, I am aware of the fall in the price of sugar from the abnormal prices of last January, but I cannot admit the possibility of varying the duty *pro rata* with changes of price. The hon. Member is in error in thinking that the price of sugar is lower than it was when the duty was imposed.

Alleged Ill-Treatment of a Prisoner at Thurles Lock-up.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings at the inquest held on the body of William Fryday, at Ballyduagh, county Tipperary, on the 22nd day of April last, at which the son of deceased, Francis S. Fryday, swore that his father told him before his death that the police took off his boots whilst in the lock-up at Thurles on the 15th April on a charge of drunkenness and hit him under the eye with one of his boots, and that he was also knocked against the wall, and that he was taken by the police from the lock-up to an out-house in the barrack yard in his stockings, and that his request for a magistrate to be sent for was refused, and to the evidence of the doctor, examined at the inquest, that deceased came by his death through peritonitis, following rupture of the spleen, caused by external violence, and that Constables Vaughan and Barrett, who assisted Constable O'Connell to take deceased from the lock-up to the out-house in the yard, were not examined at the inquest; and whether an inquiry will be ordered to be held into the allegations that the cause of the death of the deceased was his ill-treatment by the police.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have received a report from the police authorities to the effect that on the 15th April last William Fryday, while in custody in the lock-up of the police station in Thurles upon the charge of being drunk and incapable on the public street, created a continuous uproar by shouting and kicking the door of his cell at a time when a magisterial investigation was being conducted in the station. It was found necessary to remove his boots and transfer him to another portion of the building. He resisted violently, and in his struggles struck his head against the door post, cutting his eye. He was discharged from custody later upon the same day, when, for the first time, he complained of having been ill-treated by the police. He asked to see the head constable, who was then absent, but refused to wait for his arrival. Fryday died on the 21st April, and, as the result of a post-mortem examination, the jury at a coroner's inquest found that death was due to peritonitis, resulting from rupture of the spleen. The police proved that no violence was offered to him, and that at no time did he request to see a magistrate. The three constables named in the Question were present at the inquest, but the coroner and the jury intimated that they did not require their evidence, all the facts having been proved by other witnesses. Under these circumstances, I see no ground for imputing any blame to the police, and no necessity for further inquiry.

Misappropriation of Funds by Late Staff Officer of Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as a result of his investigation into the accounts of the late staff officer of the Royal Irish Constabulary Department, Dublin Castle, he has directed that the sum of £433 10s. 4d. be refunded to the widow of the said staff officer, the said sum having been deducted from an amount due on foot of an insurance policy on her late husband's life by direction of the Chief Crown Solicitor.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The reply is in the negative. Legal proceedings for the recovery of the sum misappropriated were instituted against the widow, and as a result she paid the sum in question out of a policy of insurance on the life of the deceased.

Pollution of Thames Estuary by Sewage Discharge from Forts and Barracks.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the estuary of the Thames is being polluted by the discharge of crude sewage from forts and barracks at Tilbury and Gravesend; and whether, if the War Office is unable to proceed with the works necessary for the purification of the sewage during the current financial year owing to funds not being available for the purpose, he will take steps, by a Supplementary Estimate or otherwise, to remove this difficulty, and in the interest of the public health have the works carried out without further delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Schemes have been prepared for the septic treatment of sewage from the War Department barracks and forts at Gravesend and Tilbury, and part of the work at Gravesend has already been done.

Postmarks on Letters Showing Time of Posting.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the practicability of detaching the date postmark from the obliterating mark upon the face of letters (as is already done in London) so as to enable the time of posting, which is now often illegible, to be easily read.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I fear that it is not possible to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion generally. The electrically-driven stamping machines, which are in use to some extent in London and elsewhere, separate the dated postmark from the obliterating stamp; but these machines can only be used with advantage at offices where the stamping to be done is great in amount and continuous. Double hand-stamps were tried at one time, but they were found to be too large and heavy for easy use.

Delivery of Letters to Callers on Public Holidays.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has yet arrived at a decision in regard to the general question of the delivery of letters to callers on public holidays.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Yes, and I have issued instructions that on bank holidays, and on public holidays in Scotland observed by the Department in the same way as bank holidays, persons who are not private box renters or entitled to use the *poste restante* may, on payment of a special fee of 3d., obtain at the counter of offices open to the public on those days any correspondence addressed to them which may be available and readily accessible at the time of calling. The arrangement will be duly notified in the next issue of the Post Office Guide.

Postal Deliveries at Staveley Head, near Kendal.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that at Staveley Head, near Kendal, there are nine houses having only two postal deliveries a week, whereas at Staveley Park, within half a mile of Staveley Head, there are only two houses with two deliveries a day; and whether he will endeavour to arrange, by slightly altering the route of the local postman or otherwise, to give the houses at Staveley Head a daily delivery.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not aware of the circumstances as regards the deliveries at Staveley Head, but I will make inquiry into the matter and acquaint the hon. Member with the result.

Postal Charges to Canada.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received from Lord Strathcona, High Commissioner for Canada, representations upon the subject of the postal charges to Canada; whether the High Commissioner has forwarded a copy of the debate in the Canadian Senate on the subject; and whether he is able to say if this matter will be submitted for consideration at the Colonial Conference of 1906.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Representations on the subject from the Canadian Government, together with a report of the debate in the Canadian Senate, have reached my hands, though not through Lord Strathcona; and I expressed my views fully on the matter to a deputation, including Members of this House, a short time since. I have no intention of submitting the question for consideration to the Colonial Conference; but I am unable to say whether it will or will not be raised at the Conference by the Colonial Delegates.

Empire Cables and the Colonial Conference.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether the resolutions adopted by a number of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire respecting Empire cables have been brought under his notice; and if he intends submitting, at the Colonial Conference of 1906, any scheme or policy with respect to Empire cables.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) No recent representations on the subject of the hon. Member's Question have been addressed to me, and I do not feel called upon to submit to the Colonial Conference any scheme of the kind he suggests.

Cable Communication—Agreement between the Government and the Indo-European Telegraph Company.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, having regard to the recommendation made in the first Report of Lord Balfour's Inter-Departmental Committee on Cable Communications (pp. 10 and 11) concerning the Joint-Purse Agreement relating to the transmission of telegrams to and from India, any arrangement has been concluded between His Majesty's Government and the Indo-European Telegraph Company in connection with the recent renewal of the leasing of land wires in this country and submarine cable wires between Lowestoft and the German coast; whether the terms of such agreement, if any, would be furnished to this House; and what effect such arrrangement will have in the direction of terminating or modifying the period of duration of the Joint-Purse Agreement as recommended in the Report of the above-mentioned Committee.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The negotiations recommended by Lord Balfour's Committee proved to be complicated and difficult, and it was not found practicable to effect the termination of the Joint-Purse Agreement in the manner proposed; but, in connection with the renewal of the lease of wires to the Indo-European Telegraph Company, to which the hon. Member refers, steps were taken to provide, as far as possible, that obstacles should not be placed in the way of reasonable reductions of tariff in the future. This was the main ground on which Lord Balfour's Committee desired to terminate the Joint-Purse Agreement.

Work of Coleraine Post Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has made inquiries into the action of the surveyor in ordering special returns to be made out dealing with the work at the Coleraine Post Office; whether he can state the result of his inquiries; and whether he can give the reason for altering the returns.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) No, Sir. I have not made any inquiries, as I consider the matter should be left to the discretion of the surveyor.

Sick Leave in the Post Office.

Mr CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the periods of annual leave and bank holiday reliefs are included in the six months leave which an officer may be allowed on full pay in the case of sickness on a medical certificate; and, if so, what is the reason for counting these periods as sick leave.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Under regulations applicable to the Civil Service generally, absence from duty on full pay, whether on account of annual, bank holiday, or sick leave, cannot exceed six months in any one year. The regulation seems to be liberal.

Sanitary Condition of Schools at Barvas, Island of Lewis.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether the local authority for the parish of Barvas, Island of Lewis, has submitted to the Local Government Board a detailed report by Dr. Ross, the medical officer of health for the parish, setting forth particulars of the defective water supply and other sanitary defects in seven public schools within the parish; and, in view of the fact that the health of the children attending these schools is endangered, will he state what action it is proposed to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Secretary for Scotland is not satisfied that the information before him enables him to give a complete Answer to the hon. Member's Question. He is consulting with the Local Government Board, and will communicate further with the hon. Member.

Isolation of Liverpool Smallpox Hospitals.

Mr. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has supplied a copy of the recent report of Dr. Reece, one of the medical inspectors of the Local Government Board, on the Liverpool Smallpox Hospitals to the local authority of that city; and whether, in view of Dr. Reece's conclusion that the influence of the hospitals has been responsible in material degree for the sustained prevalence of smallpox in Liverpool in 1902–3, he has made any representations to the local authority as to the desirability of discontinuing the use for smallpox purposes of the two hospitals situated within the city, viz., the Priory Road and Parkhill hospitals, which are especially condemned by Dr. Reece, and of making such other arrangements for the treatment of smallpox cases as will be less likely to be a source of danger to the inhabitants than those which now exist.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Local Government Board sent copies of Dr. Reece's report to the Town Council of Liverpool, but they did not deem it necessary, in connection with it, to make any special representations to the council of the kind suggested in the Question. The Board have issued a Memorandum containing their views as to the liability of smallpox hospitals to disseminate the disease, and as to the desirability of their being placed outside towns as far distant from any populated neighbourhood as considerations of accessibility permit. The Board sent copies of this Memorandum in 1902 to the Town Council of Liverpool, amongst other local authorities, and in the circular which accompanied it they expressly stated that smallpox hospitals should be placed in sparsely populated situations.

Average Attendance of Infants in Public Elementary Schools.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can give the average attendance of children in the infants' departments of public elementary schools, and the average attendance of such children between the ages of three and five during the last year for which the information is available.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The average attendance of children in the infants' departments of public elementary schools for the year 1903–4 was 1,572,224.

The average attendance of children between the ages of three and five was 456,068.

Cost of Elementary Education at Bournemouth, West Ham, Grantham, East Ham, Wimbledon, and Walthamstow.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can state the total charges consequent on the provision of elementary education in Bournemouth, West Ham, Grantham, East Ham, Wimbledon, and Walthamstow in the last year for which the information is available, and in each case the percentage of such charges met by Parliamentary grants.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board have no returns for a complete year under the Act of 1902 for the areas named in the Question, with the exception of Grantham and Wimbledon, and in these two cases the actual figures for 1903–4 may not represent a normal year's working. The following are approximate figures based on the latest available returns:—

Name.	Gross Expenditure.			(d)	(e)	(f)
	(a) Provision and Administration.	(b) Maintenance.	(c) Total.	Government Grants.	Percentage (d) is of (b).	Percentage (d) is of (c).
	£	£	£	£		
Bournemouth - -	1,168	15,217	16,385	11,022	72·43	67·27
West Ham - - -	56,328	186,263	242,591	101,302	54·40	41·76
Grantham - - -	307	6,056	6,363	5,926	97·85	93·13
East Ham - - -	16,554	58,570	75,124	36,890	62·99	49·11
Wimbledon - - -	1,738	12,885	14,623	9,303	72·00	63·62
Walthamstow - -	16,267	63,881	80,148	38,007	59·49	47·30

Pay of Dockyard Writing Staff.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is now able to state the result of the inquiry as to the revision of the pay of the writing staff of the dockyards.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The matter is still under consideration.

Port of London Bill—Position of Dock Companies.

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the fact that the London and India Docks Company obtained powers to make a new dock so long ago as 1901, and have spent a large sum in acquiring land for the purpose, and that it is impossible that they can spend further capital in providing dock accommodation while the question of the future administration of the Port of London remains unsettled, he will state if it is the intention of the Government to bring in any further measure for dealing with the question.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) I cannot go beyond the reply which I have given on more than one occasion, that the Government is not prepared to make any proposals with respect to the Port of London this session.

Board of Agriculture—Forestry Section.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether there is a distinct forestry section in his Department under a responsible head; whether he can state how far his Department accepts responsibility for promoting sylviculture in England, Wales, and Scotland; and in what respects its responsibility is shared by other Departments, more especially with regard to providing facilities for sylvicultural training.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) There is no distinct forestry section in the Board of Agriculture, but my Department deals annually with many applications for advice on forestry subjects, and in other ways does much to disseminate a knowledge of sound sylvicultural practice. The Board of Agriculture support two lectureships on forestry in the University Colleges situated in Bangor and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and I understand that not only is the demand for instruction at these places very satisfactory, but the experts in charge are largely consulted by the owners of woodlands. My Department has already given effect to the recommendation of the Committee, of which the hon. Member was Chairman, that the attention of corporations and municipalities be drawn to the desirability of planting with trees the catchment areas of their water supply; and I am now making arrangements to carry out the recommendation of the same Committee in regard to forestry statistics. While my Department accepts full responsibility for the general improvement of forestry in England and Wales, I have to acknowledge very friendly co-operation on the part of the Office of Woods, which has established a school in the Forest of Dean for the practical training of foresters, and in other ways has done much to help forward the movement. I have also received much valuable assistance from the Local Government Boards of England and Scotland in connection with the inquiry into the afforestation of the catchment areas of public water supplies. Education in forestry in Scotland, as the hon. Member is aware, does not fall within the province of my Board.

Compulsory Sheep-Dipping.

MR. WORSLEY-TAYLOR (Lancashire, Blackpool): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, with reference to the compulsory sheep-dipping area in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, created by virtue of Orders of the Board dated January 27th and April 15th, 1905, whether his attention has been called to representations from many parts of the said area that the provisions of the said Order will cause serious difficulty in respect of the dates fixed thereby for compulsory dipping, and in respect of the movement and sale of fat sheep and lambs, the season for which has just begun; what are the facts as to sheep scab which have made it necessary to create the said area; and if he will consider whether, consistently with maintaining due and reasonable precautions against the spread of sheep-scab, the said Orders can be modified so as to avoid or lessen the difficulties aforesaid.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) I have received representations from the district referred to, to the effect that it would be more convenient to many of the flockmasters therein that the general dipping prescribed by the Orders should be postponed until the month of August, and I am in communication with the local authorities concerned on the subject. If there is a general agreement that the later period would be more suitable for carrying out the operation of compulsory dipping in this area, I shall be glad to give effect to the wishes of those concerned. The application to the district referred to of the provisions of the Sheep Scab (Compulsory Dipping Areas) Order of 1905 was rendered necessary by the fact that disease had been detected within the area scheduled, and amongst sheep grazing over large tracts of common pasturage in the Clapham and Heasden districts. From inquiries made by inspectors of the Board it was further ascertained that the origin of several outbreaks of sheep scab which occurred in the districts surrounding this area was attributable to sheep moved from the area scheduled. It became necessary therefore, in the general interest, to take steps to eradicate the disease from this locality. As my hon. friend is aware, I am most anxious to avoid placing unnecessary restrictions upon the movement of sheep intended for immediate slaughter, but owing to the fact that sheep sold for slaughter are not necessarily at once removed from further contact with other sheep, it is impossible to exempt entirely such sheep from the requirements of dipping. If it is found to be practicable to devise some special provisions applicable to the case of young lambs which are being specially prepared for the butcher, I shall be glad to modify the Order accordingly. I may perhaps add that, in regard to all the areas scheduled under the general Order, I propose to suspend Part II. of the Sheep Scab (Compulsory Dipping Areas) Order of 1905, which deals with the movement of sheep out of such areas, until the spring of next year, so soon as I am satisfied that the prescribed dipping has been thoroughly and efficiently carried out.

Number of Licensed Hackney Carriages and Drivers—Horse and Mechanically Propelled.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of hackney carriages and hackney carriage drivers licensed up to date, number of same with mechanical licences, number of motor omnibuses and of stage carriages licensed, number of stage carriage drivers, and number of same holding mechanical licences.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I can only give the figures for the Metropolitan district, and they are as follows: Up to and including the 24th instant, there were licensed 10,986 hackney carriages, three of which are driven mechanically; 3,547 omnibuses, seventy-five of which are driven mechanically; and 1,798 tramcars, of which 967 are driven mechanically. There are 12,763 licensed hackney carriage drivers, nine of whom hold mechanical licences; and 8,558 stage carriage (*i.e.*, tram and omnibus) drivers, of whom 2,006 hold mechanical licences.

Municipal Government of Calcutta.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Municipal Government in Calcutta, established by Lord Northbrook in 1876 and developed by Lord Dufferin, so that out of seventy-five members of the corporation fifty were elected by the ratepayers, has during the last few years been reorganised in such a manner as to reduce the number of elected members to twenty-five and thus place them in a perpetual minority; and, in view of the fact that a Committee has been appointed to prepare a scheme whereby the administration of Calcutta will be broken up into boroughs, will he explain why no member of the Corporation of Calcutta has been appointed to a seat on that Committee.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Committee of six (three being Europeans and three Natives) appointed by the Government of Bengal to work out a scheme for decentralising the work of the Calcutta Corporation, includes two members of the corporation. A third member of the Committee was recently a member of the corporation. I am unable to say why no elected member of the corporation is on the Committee, but having regard to the fact that of the three native gentlemen on the Committee one is a Judge of the High Court and two are members of the Bengal Legislative Council, I have no reason to suppose that any better selection could have been made.

Construction of Telegraph between Teheran and Indian Frontier.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the construction of the telegraph land line between Teheran and the frontier of India via Kerman and Robat is yet completed, or when such completion may be expected; and whether this line, when completed, will be opened for public traffic.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Telegrams can be exchanged between Teheran and Quetta via Kerman and Robat, but the system is not sufficiently complete for transmission of public traffic. Action has been taken to carry the Indian extension of the Central Persia line through Beluchistan to Karachi; and on this line being completed it will be at once opened for public traffic.

Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions in Indian Administration.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): To ask the Secretary of State for India, with regard to the memorial urging the separation of judicial and executive functions in Indian administration, presented in August, 1899, can some statement be placed before Parliament showing what course has been followed since that memorial was forwarded to the Indian Government, and what is the general view taken of this subject by that authority; and can any of the more recent correspondence on this question between the Government of India and the Secretary of State be presented to Parliament at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) As I promised in my reply to the hon. Member for West Denbighshire, on the 23rd February† last, I wrote to the Government of India on the 10th March asking for a report of the results up to the present time of their consideration of the subject. I have not yet received a reply. There has been no other recent correspondence on this question between the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

Mrs. Grace Pakenham's Estate, Mahon, County Roscommon.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have had under their consideration the sale and purchase of the entire estate of Mrs. Grace Pakenham, Mahon, in the county Roscommon, including the pastoral and agricultural hamlet of Strokestown; and, if so, whether any progress has been made by the Estates Commissioners in this matter; and have they declared the whole estate to be an estate within the meaning of the Land Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) No proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before the Estates Commissioners.

Imprisonment of Crew of Steamer "Parthania" at Singapore.

Mr. ROBSON (South Shields): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state under what circumstances, and for what offence, some of the crew of the steamer "Parthania," owned by Messrs. Donaldson Brothers, have just been imprisoned at Singapore; and, if the men were imprisoned for refusing to carry contraband of war, will he take steps to see that they are released.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have no information on the subject, but I have telegraphed to the Governor of the Straits Settlements asking for a report.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies—Other Penalties.

Mr. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, when making inquiries as to the reasons for the repatriation of the 332 Chinese to December last, he will also inquire what penalties in addition to repatriation were imposed; whether all or any portion of the wages earned by such labourers were withheld or deducted as is provided by Clause 27; and whether such repatriated labourers were returned merely to the ports of embarkation or to their homes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I will make the further inquiries in accordance with the hon. Member's request.

Strength and Cost of Volunteer Battalions in the Field Army.

Mr. SEELY (Lincoln): To ask the Secretary of State for War what are the number of Volunteer battalions in the Field Army; what is the enrolled strength of those battalions; and what is the total annual cost including grants, camp allowances, and other expenses.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) There are twenty-seven infantry units and one bearer company of the Volunteer forces in the Field Army, and their enrolled strength, including permanent staff, on the 1st November, 1904, amounted to 28,450. Their total cost for the year 1904–5 amounted approximately to £210,000.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1073.

Military Honours at Soldiers' Funerals.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the funeral of the late Corporal John Henshaw, Crimean veteran, at Weaste, on the 6th instant; and if he will explain what were the exceptional circumstances which permitted military honours to be given in this case while it is forbidden in others.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) I have no information on the case mentioned, but I am making inquiries.

Colonial Conference, 1906.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Colonial Conference which is to assemble in 1906 will be constituted in the same way, and deliberate under the same conditions, as the Colonial Conference of 1902, or whether there will be any change, and if so, in what respect; whether he still adheres to his intention, declared at Sheffield and elsewhere, not to make the merits of any proposal for colonial preference founded on the taxation of food an issue at the next election, or whether that intention has been modified, or might in the future be modified, by the proceedings of the Colonial Conference to be held in 1906; whether he still adheres to the intention declared in the past not to propose to Parliament any scheme for the commercial union of the Empire, unless it has been formulated by an Imperial Conference representing not only, like the Colonial Conference of 1902, the self-governing Colonies, but also India and (so far as may be) the other dependencies of the Crown, and laid in the shape so formulated before the electorate at the time of a general election; whether he intends to summon an Imperial Conference, representing the whole Empire, as distinct from a Colonial Conference of the pattern of 1902, during the continuance of the present Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) With all respect to my noble friend, I think those parts of his Question not already answered in the House, may more conveniently be dealt with in the debate on Tuesday than in an Answer to a Parliamentary Question.

Scotch Church Dispute—Position of Lord Johnstone.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that Lord Johnstone, having acted as senior counsel for the Free Church of Scotland, is now compelled, as Lord Ordinary on the Bills, to decide cases raising questions of possession between that Church and the United Free Church and cannot decline jurisdiction; and what course the Government proposes to take in the circumstances.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I am advised that the hon. Member's Question proceeds on an erroneous view of the law. The point has been already considered and dealt with by the Court. Lord Johnstone's declinature has been sustained, and it has been arranged that the cases referred to shall be remitted to another Judge.

Colonial Conference, 1906.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the representatives at the Colonial Conference, 1906, would be asked to discuss whether the idea of a closer union on a commercial or any other basis commended itself to them; and, if so, in what precise manner it could be carried into effect; whether any scheme formulated would be submitted by the colonial representatives to their respective Governments, and no scheme would be deemed binding on His Majesty's Government until it had been submitted to the electorate of this country.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) (1) The Answer to the first Question is in the negative. (2) I have no control over the colonial representatives or the Colonial

Governments. (3) Nothing done by the Conference can be binding on His Majesty's Government.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Gunnery Practice.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the "Magnificent," "Majestic," "Prince George," "Victorious," "Cæsar," "Hannibal," "Illustrious," "Jupiter," "Mars," "Goliath," "Ocean," and "Vengeance" carried out from each of their four 12-inch guns the full quarterly practice, including the firing of full charges for the quarters ending 31st December, 1904, and 31st March, 1905; will he state the reasons for the omission when any portion of the firing was not carried out; and have any special instructions been issued to any of the above ships with reference to firing from any of their 12-inch guns.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): So far as is known all the ships named which were in commission at the time carried out the full quarterly practice, including the firing of full charges, for the quarters named, with the exception of the "Majestic," in which ship, as already stated, two of the 12-inch guns developed defects and were exchanged. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Atlantic Mail Routes—Galway Route.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor-General of Canada, advocating the Galway route for the transmission of mails and merchandise across the Atlantic; and whether it is intended to discuss this subject at the Colonial Conference of 1906.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have not seen any report of the speech referred to by the hon. Member. Without expressing any opinion with regard to this particular scheme, of which I have little knowledge, the question of such a service appears eminently suitable for discussion at the next Colonial Conference.

The Price of Sugar.

COLONEL SADLER (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been directed to the fall in the price of sugar, to-day's value being 5s. per cwt. below what it was in January last, whilst new crop sugar is quoted at under 10s. per cwt., or less than one penny per pound; and whether, having regard to the relative rate of the duty to the total value of sugar when it was imposed, he will favourably consider a *pro rata* reduction.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Yes, Sir, I am aware of the fall in the price of sugar from the abnormal prices of last January; but I cannot admit the possibility of varying the duty *pro rata* with changes of price. The hon. Member is in error in thinking that the price of sugar is lower than it was when the duty was imposed.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is it not true that sugar is nearly double the price now as compared with the period before the duty was imposed, and does the right hon. Gentleman attribute the rise to the duty or the Convention?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member is endeavouring to put an argument in the form of a Question. If the hon. Member will raise the question as briefly in the debate on Monday I shall be happy to answer him.

Motor-Cars—Speed Regulations.

MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any applications under Section 9 of the Motor-Car Act, 1903, made by various local authorities to the Local Government Board to issue regulations limiting the speed of motor-cars within the areas, or parts of the areas, of such local authorities to a speed not exceeding ten miles an hour, have not yet been finally dealt with; and, if so, whether he will give the names of such local authorities, and the dates when their respective applications were received by the Board.

The PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): Three applications under Section 9 of the Motor-Car Act, 1903, are now before the Local Government Board, made respectively by the Denbighshire County Council on the 16th of this month, by the Town Council of Guildford on March 7th last, and by the Town Council of Ealing. The last was originally made in October, 1903, and after the lapse of many months, during which the matter rested with the town council, has recently been revived. In twelve other cases applications have been made and not formally withdrawn, but in each of these cases it is for the local authorities concerned to take the next step, and as for some months no communication has been received from them, it is assumed that the applications are either temporarily or permanently abandoned.

Mr. SLACK: Does the right hon. Gentleman include St. Albans in the list of twelve? That city has not withdrawn its application, which has been urgently pressed.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot answer that without notice, but so far as I am aware, whenever an application remains suspended, it is because the local authority has not replied to the communication from the Local Government Board.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of allowing local authorities to settle these matters for themselves? The Local Government Board must be unacquainted with every locality.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: In doubtful cases there is an inquiry.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): What does the right hon. Gentleman mean by the next step? I understand the Local Government Board sends down an inspector to hold an inquiry, that he reports to the Local Government Board, who communicate the report to the local authority. What is the next step to be taken?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think any of these cases have reached that stage. What has happened has been that application has been made and notice of objection received. Those objections have been communicated to the local authorities and no reply has been received from them. The stage of public inquiry has not been reached.

Mr. SLACK: Was not a letter written at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor on June 3rd, 1904, to the town clerk of St. Albans in which it says——

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman can hardly answer that Question without notice.

Spotted Fever in Northamptonshire.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what action he has taken with reference to the Northamptonshire cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis or spotted fever; and whether, in view of the rapidity of its spread and fatal effects in Germany, special means will be taken, and, if so, what means, to prevent its spread in the United Kingdom.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have caused one of their medical inspectors to visit the district affected for the purpose of ascertaining the facts, and of giving advice to the district council and their officers. As a result of the inspector's visit, the Board have expressed their willingness to entertain any proposal from the district council to make it compulsory during a limited time to notify to them cases of the disease referred to which occur in their district. I may add that the Board would be prepared to entertain similar applications from other local authorities who may deem it desirable to adopt this course, and thus to safeguard their districts from the importation and spread of the disease.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR: Would the right hon. Gentleman not consider it desirable to make the notification national instead of local?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Up to the present time I have not thought it desirable.

Sewage Pollution of the Thames Estuary.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the sewage from the towns of Faversham and Whitstable is discharged into the Thames estuary in a crude condition; and whether he will make a representation to the authorities of those towns urging them to adopt some method of sewage purification.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I will communicate with the Town Council of Faversham and the Whitstable Urban District Council with regard to this matter.

Electric Motor Broughams.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any regulation has been made by the Local Government Board for compelling electric motor-cars to give the audible and sufficient warning required by Section 3 of The Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: One of the regulations in the Motor-Cars (Use and Construction) Order, 1904, issued by the Local Government Board, makes it the duty of every person driving or in charge of a motor-car to give, whenever necessary, by sounding the bell or other instrument required by the section referred to in the Question, audible and sufficient warning of the approach or position of the motor-car.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that that regulation is habitually disregarded by nearly all electrical broughams in London?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not able to answer that Question, which I think ought to be addressed to the Home Secretary.

Denbighshire Education Dispute.

MR. MOSS (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the statements made at the annual meeting of the Denbighshire Education Committee, held at Chester on Friday, May 19th last, and to the resolution unanimously passed at that meeting; whether he has received a copy of such resolution; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any, and what, steps in relation to such statements and in reply to such resolution.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made on the 18th inst. by the chairman of the building committee of the Denbighshire education authority, to the effect that the council had appointed a surveyor before the appointed day to visit, inspect, and report upon the condition of every school in the county, provided and unprovided, and that the building committee had proceeded to execute the necessary repairs of the provided schools in accordance with the recommendations of the surveyor's report; and whether he proposes to take steps to verify the accuracy of this statement.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I have this morning received a communication from the local education authority for Denbighshire. I am inquiring into the matter, and hope to send them a full reply at the earliest possible date.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): But the hon. Gentleman made a very definite statement about a fortnight ago that they had not yet appointed any one to survey the county schools. Does he still say that is so?

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I can hardly answer without going into detail. My statement was substantially correct. I will write to the local education authority, and if there is any correction to be made it shall be made.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Then I take it the hon. Baronet did not communicate with the local authority before he made the statement. I may tell him, as a matter of fact, that they did appoint a surveyor.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I have said I will communicate with the local authority.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Did the hon. Baronet say he communicated with the local authority before he made the statement referred to?

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I did not say that. What I did say I believe I shall be able to justify.

Agrarian Crime in England.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will issue a monthly Parliamentary Return setting forth the number of offences reported to the police in agrarian districts in England and Wales, classifying the various offences, and the number under every head in every county.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.): No, Sir. The system on which the statistics are prepared does not distinguish between agrarian and non-agrarian districts; and the collection of a monthly Return would involve an immense amount of trouble.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that quarterly Returns are made as regards Ireland? Why not for England? Are there too many offences committed?

Mr. COCHRANE: It is not thought necessary.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is there a manufacturing department for crime in England?

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Are we to understand that the number of crimes is so small that they are not worth returning. Where is the difficulty in giving the Return there?

Mr. COCHRANE: It is absolutely unnecessary. The same conditions do not obtain in England and Ireland.

Mr. FLAVIN: That is your opinion, not our's.

Agrarian Crime in Scotland.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he will issue a monthly Parliamentary Return setting forth the number of offences reported to the police in agrarian districts in Scotland, classifying the various offences, and the number under every head in every county.

The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): I refer the hon. Member to the Return given every year in the Report on the Judicial Statistics for Scotland. I am not prepared to give him any other Return.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a benevolent Government gives these Returns for Ireland? Will he not let us know in the same way the amount of crime committed in Scotland?

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: I am glad to hear the hon. Member is so well off under the Irish Government. The information is contained in the Return I have referred to.

Mr. MACVEAGH: But as we are so much interested in the matter, cannot the right hon. Gentleman keep the information up to date? We get it quarterly in Ireland.

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: We think once a year sufficient for ordinary purposes.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will send a copy of that Answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Irish National Education Board—Rule 127 (b).

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now say whether he will lay upon the Table the minutes of all meetings of the Commissioners of National Education at which Rule 127 (b) was considered.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Yes, Sir; the minutes will be laid on the Table.

Banogue Schools, County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the amalgamation of the male and female schools, in the case of the national school in Banogue, county Limerick, has been carried out by the Commissioners of Education against the advice and opinion of the manager; whether, seeing that for the ordinary school work all the pupils, including infants, are taught in one room, he will state what is the number of children on the rolls; what are the dimensions of the school room; what floor space does it afford per child for the number on the rolls; is any class-room or cloak-room attached to it; and whether, seeing that the infant children are compelled to stand for hours every day for want of desks, and that there is no room for additional desks, will he say if the Commissioners still intend that this amalgamation shall be maintained.

MR WALTER LONG: The separate schools were, before amalgamation, under one roof. The manager protested against the amalgamation solely because the average attendance had been reduced owing to illness. The schoolhouse contains two rooms, each 34 feet by 18 feet. There are eighty-four children on the rolls, and therefore 14 square feet of floor space is available for each child. There is a room for each of the two teachers, and no additional class-room is necessary.

Alleged Ill-Treatment of a Prisoner at Thurles Lock-up.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings at the inquest held on the body of William Fryday, at Ballyduagh, county Tipperary, on the 22nd day of April last, at which the son of deceased, Francis S. Fryday, swore that his father told him before his death that the police took off his boots whilst in the lock-up at Thurles on the 15th April on a charge of drunkenness and hit him under the eye with one of his boots, and that he was also knocked against the wall, and that he was taken by the police from the lock-up to an out-house in the barrack yard in his stockings, and that his request for a magistrate to be sent for was refused, and to the evidence of the doctor, examined at the inquest, that deceased came by his death through peritonitis, following rupture of the spleen, caused by external violence, and that Constables Vaughan and Barrett, who assisted Constable O'Connell to take deceased from the lock-up to the out-house in the yard, were not examined at the inquest; and whether an inquiry will be ordered to be held into the allegations that the cause of the death of the deceased was his ill-treatment by the police.

MR. WALTER LONG: It would be more convenient to furnish with the Votes a printed reply to this Question, and, with the hon. Member's permission, I will adopt that course. The reply is necessarily of considerable length.

Mrs. Trant Stanton's Estate, Kinsale.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that arrangements have been made for the sale to the tenants of Mrs. Rose Trant Stanton's Estate, Ballyfeard, Kinsale, county Cork; will he say whether the evicted farms at present in possession of labourers are included in the sale; and, if so, what inquiries have been made by the Estates Commissioners for the purpose of enabling the evicted tenants to avail themselves of the clauses of the Land Act to regain possession of their holdings.

MR. WALTER LONG: An application for sale has been lodged, but the property has not yet been declared an estate, and consequently the case has not yet been referred for inspection and inquiry. Applications have been received from persons who state that they are evicted tenants from the estate, and due inquiries will be made.

Irish Agrarian Crimes Returns.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state the object of issuing periodical Parliamentary Returns regarding agrarian offences in Ireland; whether he is aware that no such Returns are issued either for urban offences in Ireland or for urban or agrarian offences in England, Scotland, or Wales; and whether, seeing that the particulars given in these Returns are otherwise available in the Civil and Judicial Statistics, the publication of the periodical Returns of agrarian offences will be discontinued.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have already stated that these Returns are furnished for the information of Parliament, and that it is not proposed to discontinue them. The particulars given in the Returns are not distinguished in the Criminal and Judicial Statistics.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the police in Ireland are always prepared to supply crime to order?

MR. MACVEAGH: The right hon. Gentleman has not told me the object of publishing these Returns. He promised to inquire as to that. Is he aware no such Returns are given for England, Scotland, and Wales? Is the object political in issuing these invidious and offensive Returns?

MR. WALTER LONG: They are furnished for the information of Parliament. I have nothing to do with the other Departments.

Moneymore Disturbances.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state if Captain Welch, R.M., swore, at the petty sessions Court, that a deputation of four Orangemen waited upon him, and that, by promising them that certain contingents of Nationalists would not be allowed to pass through Moneymore, he succeeded in quieting his visitors down; whether he can state the names and occupations of the four visitors, and their positions in the Orange order; and whether there is any precedent for such a compact as Captain Welch is alleged to have entered into.

MR. WALTER LONG: Captain Welch's evidence was not to the effect stated. He neither swore that he had made any promise, nor had he as a matter of fact made any promise. He denied on oath that any compact had been made. But, as I informed the hon. Member on Monday,† he explained to the persons who waited on him that only those processions whose routes lay through Moneymore would be allowed to pass through that place. I cannot see that any useful purpose would be served by stating the names of those persons.

MR. MACVEAGH: Whom did these four represent?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say.

MR. MACVEAGH: Did not Captain Welch swear they were representatives of the local Orangemen?

MR. WALTER LONG: That is a different Question to the one on the Paper. It is impossible for me to answer without notice.

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Treasury sanction has been obtained for increases of fifty per cent. and upwards in the salaries of certain officials in the Agricultural Department, some of whom had been only about two years in the Department's service, whilst at the same time unsuccessful applications were made to the Treasury for increases of less than 1s. a week in the salaries of clerks in the veterinary branch who had been engaged on the same class of work for a decade; and whether he will explain why the latter are denied the right of promotion to higher posts as opportunity offers

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† See page 978.

MR. WALTER LONG: This Question, in other forms, has been repeatedly answered. I refer in particular to the reply given by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover to the Question put by the hon. Member for East Mayo on June 30th † last.

Carrowkeel Proclaimed Meeting.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the names of the constables who threw Mr. Thomas Higgins, J.P., over a stone wall at Carrowkeel, on April 30th last.

MR. WALTER LONG: I informed the hon. Member on Monday ‡ that Mr. Higgins was not thrown over a wall, but that he was merely pushed on by a constable. The name of this particular constable is not known; there were a considerable number of constables present, and several persons were moved on.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: On my responsibility as a Member of this House, I affirm that Mr. Higgins was violently thrown over the wall; and that the information supplied to the right hon. Gentleman is incorrect. I saw the act.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): Do you know that Mr. Higgins' life would have been lost unless someone was at the other side of the wall to catch him?

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I saw this, and it was a brutal exhibition.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to supply accurate information?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have no reason to suppose that my information is inaccurate.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I hold to my statement that the information is inaccurate.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): After my hon. friend says he was present and saw the incident, the right hon. Gentleman rises and states he still holds that his information is correct. I wish to ask whether that is in order?

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): Can this House try the issue?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: It is a question of the veracity of a Member.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: That is an issue. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: You are not at the Old Bailey.]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is the time for asking Questions, and not for making statements and contradicting them. The matter can be raised and thrashed out at a later stage.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: This is a question of impugning the personal testimony of a Member who says he saw the incident as he was present at the transaction.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said unless he could raise the matter at the end of Questions he could not raise it at all, because a "blocking" notice prevented it being discussed.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The matter cannot be raised as one of privilege, but it may be discussed in Supply.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN thought that, as the Chief Secretary impugned his veracity, he should be allowed to state exactly what occurred.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) rose to a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question cannot be discussed now.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I adhere to my statement, which is correct.

Coalisland Polling Station.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a protest, signed by 207 local government electors, against the proposed change by the returning officer, Mr. Claud Hamilton, of their polling station from Coalisland to New Mills, on the grounds that rumours had reached him that there was some disorderly conduct at the previous election, notwithstanding the fact that the presiding officer, polling clerks, candidates, and police state that the rumour was baseless; whether he is aware that the Orange village of New Mills has neither police station nor telegraph office, that it is two miles distant from Coalisland, that there are only 150 voters in the neighbourhood as against 480 in Coalisland, mainly mill workers, many of whom, after quitting work at six o'clock, would be unable to walk two miles and have their votes cast within the statutory period; and whether, in the public interest, he has communicated with Mr. Hamilton and made to him representations that the proposed change should be abandoned.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxvii, 170.

‡ See page 969.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; the protest was received and communicated to the Returning Officer, who stated that after the elections in 1902 complaints were made to him as to the manner in which voters, agents, and others had been treated by the crowd at Brackaville. He took steps to investigate these complaints before deciding to change the polling station to New Mills, and satisfied himself that they were made *bona fide* and were true in fact. The Returning Officer in making the change was not influenced in any way by political considerations. Under Sections 1 and 13 of the Local Government Board Election Order of February, 1899, the Returning Officer has the right to determine the situation and number of polling stations and the Board have no jurisdiction to interfere in the matter. I have communicated to Mr. Hamilton the representations made to me against the change, and that officer regrets he cannot see his way to revert to the old arrangement. I may add that I personally regret he has not seen his way to take this course.

Aughrim (Galway) Arrests.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the reason why the thirteen men arrested in the neighbourhood of Aughrim, county Galway, on the morning of April 1st, were not proceeded against by ordinary summons; and whether he can state why those men were taken out of their beds between the hours of 4 and 5 a.m., and were not allowed to have their breakfast before being brought into Ballinasloe, where they were detained until 11 a.m. before they were furnished with any food.

MR. WALTER LONG: The arrest of these men, instead of proceeding against them by summons, was a legal and proper course, which was adopted with the object of bringing them more speedily to justice. They were arrested at the early hour mentioned in order to avoid turbulence. At half-past seven that morning the brother of one of the prisoners, who resides in Ballinasloe, sent word to the police station that he was about to provide breakfast for the whole party. The breakfast, however, was not sent in till between nine and ten.

MR. ROCHE: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the date of the offence and of the arrests?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have not the information here.

MR. MACVEAGH: Why were these people not summoned instead of being arrested?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have answered that Question.

Reid v. Coote.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. William Coote, Grand Master of the Orange Lodge at Carntall, county Tyrone, was recently a defendant in an action, Reid *v.* Coote, in the King's Bench, listed for trial, in which the cause of action was conspiracy to boycott; and that Coote did not go to trial, but settled the action for a substantial sum; and, if so, why Mr. Coote has been continued in the commission of the peace.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am informed that the action in question was settled without trial by a friendly compromise on the terms that Mr. Coote should pay to the plaintiff a contribution towards his costs, that all further litigation should cease, and that the parties should resume their former amicable relations. The same controversy came up recently in a case decided by Mr. Justice Barton, but as it is stated that this decision is to be appealed from, it would be obviously improper that the question of Mr. Coote's commission of the peace should be considered pending the result of the appeal.

MR. DILLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman sure it is the same controversy? I am told it has no relation whatever to the case under appeal. Seeing that this man by his action admitted he was guilty of conspiracy to boycott, why is his name retained in the commission of the peace?

MR. WALTER LONG said he would make further inquiry. He had given the information supplied him.

Ireland—New Education Rules.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can lay upon the Table of the House a copy of any Returns or Tables which were submitted to the Board of National Education in Ireland showing the effect on the salaries and promotions of the new rules or regulations in the Code of 1905 which did not appear in the previous Code.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners do not consider it desirable to make public any Returns or other documents considered by them when revising their rules and regulations.

Coolaclarig Evicted Farm.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that police are in occupation of an evicted farm at Coolaclarig, Listowel, from which a tenant named Walsh was evicted for a half year's rent, and that the tenant has made several applications to Lord Ormathwaite, the landlord, and Robert Fitzgerald, the agent, for reinstatement, which has been refused; and whether he will consider the advisability of withdrawing the constabulary from the farm.

MR. WALTER LONG: The police are not in occupation of this evicted farm, but a protection post, consisting of two constables, exists on it for the protection of the caretaker. A tenant who had taken the farm was murdered on July 29th, 1888. The constant personal protection of the caretaker is considered to be necessary, and it is not intended to withdraw this protection.

MR. FLAVIN: As this man has several times applied for reinstatement and been refused will the Government now take action?

MR. WALTER LONG: The Government cannot take action. It is for the landlord and tenant to come to terms.

MR. FLAVIN: The tenant is willing and has said so through me, yet he is being treated with contempt.

Lord Listowel's Estate, North Kerry.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what action, if any, the Estates Commissioners have taken in connection with the application of cottiers and sub-tenants on Lord Listowel's Estate at Pilgrim Hill, North Kerry, to have their holdings enlarged; whether, seeing that tenants in the district have held grazing tracts of land, he will say what steps the Estates Commissioners have taken to divide those grazing lands amongst the smaller tenants who have uneconomic holdings.

MR. WALTER LONG: The agreements for purchase have been lodged, and the matter will shortly be ready for inspection. Application has been made by cottier tenants at Pilgrim Hill North to have their holdings enlarged, and the question will be considered in due course.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Will the Estates Commissioners inquire into this particular matter? It is the case I alluded to recently in which the agreement made between landlord and tenant was for the same number of years purchase as in the agreement between the landlord and the Estates Commissioners.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I know nothing about the facts, but no doubt they will be inquired into by the Estates Commissioners.

Tirkane National School Teacher.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the character of the speeches delivered at a meeting on the 16th ultimo at Carntougher, county Derry, organised by Mr. R. C. Bonner, teacher in Tirkane National School; and whether, in view of the fact that national school teachers are debarred from taking part in political meetings, he will say what action, if any, has been taken in this case.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir, and the matter has been brought to the notice of the Commissioners of National Education.

Mr. SLOAN: Has any action been taken?

[No Answer was returned.]

Prosecution of Mr. Shawe Tener.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, in the case of a prosecution under the Local Government Act of Mr. Shawe Tener, agent of the Marquess of Clanricarde, for having voted when disqualified at a meeting of the Portumna Board of Guardians, the justices who adjudicated and refused to convict, but agreed to state a case for the superior Courts so far back as two months ago, have not yet stated such case, though more than once requested to do so; and, if so, will the attention of the Lord Chancellor be called to the conduct of the magistrates in question.

Mr. WALTER LONG: If the facts were as mentioned, it would be open to the guardians to take proceedings in the superior Courts to compel the magistrates to state a case. But I am informed that the case has been fully stated and signed by the magistrates, and that it was forwarded to the guardians' solicitor on the 17th instant.

Lough Corrib Drainage Board.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the neglect of their duties shown by the Lough Corrib Drainage Board; whether, seeing that the gentlemen composing the Board do not reside near Lough Corrib, and in view of the need which exists for a thorough cleaning of the mill race at Galway, the Government will take over the duties of the Lough Corrib, Drainage Trustees; and, if not, will the Government hand over this work to the Galway County Council.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): The transfer of the functions of drainage trustees to a county council is regulated by Section 20 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and the consent of the trustees is necessary. The Board of Works cannot permanently take over the duties of the trustees, but can only do so temporarily, and to the extent authorised by the Drainage Acts, where the trustees are found by the Board to be in default in maintaining the district. From the information before the Board of Works it is considered that the district, including the mill race, is in a fair state of maintenance.

Irish Teachers' Pensions.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether teachers who spend some years in teaching in Poor Law Union schools previous to the passing of the Pension Act, and who were subsequently transferred to ordinary national schools, will be allowed such years in calculating the amount of pension allowance payable to them on retirement.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The National School Teachers (Ireland) Act, 1879, only enables pension to be granted in respect of service as a "classed teacher," as defined in Section 2 of the Act; and, as the teachers in Poor Law Union schools do not come within this definition, there is no power to give effect to the suggestion of the hon. Member.

The Colonial Conference.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, on December 11th last, the Imperial Federation (Defence) Committee submitted to him a memorandum claiming that the question of colonial co-operation in the maintenance of the Navy necessitated primary consideration at the proposed Colonial Conference; whether he assented to that claim; and whether he adheres to his intention to submit this question for primary consideration by the conference.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to the first part of the hon. Gentleman's Question I have to say that he correctly represents, if I understand it, the memorandum submitted to me by the deputation to which he refers, but nothing fell from me indicating that I was of opinion that this question should be first in order of importance, or that it should be the first submitted to the Colonial Conference.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that the Government will take action in the sense advocated by the deputation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I have not said that.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: What is it that the right hon. Gentleman intends to do?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman was a member of the deputation, but if he was that was the time to ask the question.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No, I was not.

India and the Colonial Conference.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is proposed that the Indian Government should be represented at the Colonial Conference of 1906; if it is, whether such representation was contemplated by the resolution of the Colonial Conference of 1902, which suggested the summoning of another Conference in 1906; and, if the Indian Government is to be represented without such suggestion having been made, whether he will state the reason for this change from the ordinary composition of Colonial Conferences.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): May I ask whether, in addition to the representation of India, steps will be taken to give due weight to the interests of the Crown Colonies and other dominions of His Majesty?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the conference of 1906 meets before a dissolution it will be, of course, the conference contemplated by the resolution of the conference which met in 1902. This resolution did not suggest either Indian or Crown Colony representation.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether, if India is not represented, any proposals for colonial preference will be debated at that conference?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what ground the hon. Gentleman has for thinking that the Government mean to make proposals to that conference on the subject.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that at the last conference we were informed—of course the full report was never published, but we were informed—that someone was present on behalf of India?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I have refreshed my memory this morning of the resolution actually passed at the conference——

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I do not mean the resolution.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is that on which the Question was based, and that resolution will be strictly followed, as far as we are concerned, supposing the conference meets before a dissolution.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Are we to understand that, as India is not to be represented at that conference, no resolutions arrived at by the conference propounding a scheme of Imperial preference will form the basis of a scheme to be submitted to the electorate at the next election?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I really think that the hon. Gentleman is travelling far beyond the Question originally put, and I would suggest to him that these are questions which will probably be debated on another occasion.

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham): Did I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that His Majesty's Government would not submit any proposals in regard to Imperial preference to the conference which will meet next year, if it should meet before the dissolution?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, we shall not make proposals any more than at the previous conferences.

Debate on the Indian Budget.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that no opportunity has been given this session for the discussion of Indian affairs, he will arrange for the Indian Budget to be taken at an early date after the Whitsuntide recess.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am anxious, if possible, to bring on the Indian Budget early this year, and I have been considering the matter with my right hon. friend the Secretary for India. I cannot give a pledge, but I still hope to be able to carry out some plan by which an early discussion will be secured.

THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman, with regard to the business for next week, and as part of that, what day he will allocate for the debate on the Motion standing in the name of my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose to go on with the Budget on Monday, and the arrangements after that must in part depend upon the right hon. Gentleman himself. I am very anxious to give him the day for which he has asked; but, as he will remember, I made an appeal to him when he first made his proposal, to which appeal he has, I think, so far not seen his way to make any response. I think he will himself agree with me that I am in some difficulty. The substance of what occurred was this. The very subject of the vote of censure was brought up at the right hon. Gentleman's instance on a Motion for the adjournment; he was listened to with profound attention and respect by this side of the House [Cries of "So would you have been"]; he was followed by a Member of the Government who was not allowed to finish, I think, one sentence so that he could be heard; and during the whole of that time the interruptions from that side of the House were not protested against by the right hon. Gentleman. Now I do not wish to go back on an old sore, but let it be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman proposes that we should discuss the same subject; and I propose to put up the same speakers more or less in the same order. That is to say, I shall probably ask my right hon. friend the Secretary for the Colonies to speak early in the debate, and I shall certainly reserve myself for some later stage of the proceedings. Now, I think the right hon. Gentleman will feel that I am bound, not only to my right hon. friend but to the House, to see that, so far as I am concerned, the scene which disgraced us in the eyes of the world ——

*__Mr. JOHN ELLIS__ (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): It was a disgrace to you primarily.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (resuming) does not recur; and that there is some danger of its recurring, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, is quite evident from the noisy and disorderly interruption of the hon. Gentleman who was quite unable to control himself on the previous occasion. In these circumstances my appeal is simply to the right hon. Gentleman to do his best to prevent a recurrence of such an outrage upon decency and fair play.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am greatly surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have renewed to-day the condition or stipulation which he mentioned two days ago, and which at the time I did not regard as of a serious character at all. I cannot imagine that the right hon. Gentleman's appeal is a serious appeal; in the first place, because the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the Chair alone can maintain and enforce order in this House, and if I were to give—which it never entered into my mind to do—the undertaking he asks for, I should be so far usurping the authority of the Chair; in the second place, because the right hon. Gentleman must also be aware that if there was any disorder on Monday [Cries of "If!"]—well, so far as there was any disorder on Monday, it was occasioned by the fact that the right hon. Gentleman departed from the invariable practice when the personal conduct either of a Minister or a Member is directly impugned, and did not himself rise to meet the charges against him. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that there was no discourtesy intended or felt towards the Colonial Secretary; but the House, or a large number of Members of the House, having experienced for weeks and months past the greatest difficulty in ascertaining from the right hon. Gentleman his view of his own opinions, and finding that he, when confronted by a statement made by me in very plain and unaggressive terms showing as we thought, as I thought, and as I still think, at all events a *prima facie* case of a breach of faith on his part, did not rise immediately to explain the circumstances—that was the cause of the disorder, that, Sir, and that alone. And if similar circumstances arose again, I think it is only natural to suppose that a similar expression of feeling would be given. There has never been any desire here on the part of any of my friends to disturb the ordinary business of the House unless on such an occasion as this when the ordinary practice was flagrantly departed from. I cannot give the undertaking he asks for.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman, by the observations he has just made, has laid it down that it is not discourteous to an hon. or right hon. Gentleman to keep him standing fifty minutes without allowing him to speak. He has also laid it down that the provocation given was sufficient to justify that procedure. That is a doctrine which goes to the very root of Parliamentary business. The right hon. Gentleman, to my intense surprise, has defended his friends by saying that I was violating a rule of the House by not rising at once, and by waiting until the whole attack which was in contemplation by hon. Gentlemen opposite had developed, and until the person accused had heard all the accusations that were made against him. That also is a new doctrine to which I absolutely refuse to subscribe. The right hon. Gentleman has told his friends that they would be justified in pursuing the same course if the same situation were to arise. Well, but the same situation will arise. Whatever attacks may be made upon me in the earlier stages of the debate for which the right hon. Gentleman has asked, and which I am anxious to give, whatever the charges made against me may be, I do not propose to rise early in that debate, any more than I proposed to rise early in the debate the other night. In those circumstances the right hon. Gentleman, having given fair warning——

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As perhaps the decision of the right hon. Gentleman is hanging in the balance, I wish to explain that I do not conceive this Motion of my right hon. friend's to be at all of the same character as the proceedings of last Monday. This is a Motion dealing with the whole question of the Colonial Conference and the policy to be submitted to it. Therefore it is a perfectly reasonable thing that the Government should put up such Members as they think fit, and it will be no ground for disorder. But on Monday night last there was a direct challenge of the honourable conduct of the right hon. Gentleman, and I never before knew a Member of Parliament, either an ordinary Member, if I may be allowed to use the term, or a Front Bench Member, still less a high official of the Crown, who refused or appeared to evade replying. [Cries of "Withdraw."] The Chancellor of the Exchequer appears to lose his temper entirely the moment any question of this sort arises. The ground taken on Monday last was that the attack was a personal one, to which the right hon. Gentleman alone could give a reply. That would not be the case at all on the occasion of the Motion which it is proposed to bring forward on Monday, or whatever day may be fixed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the interruption of the right hon. Gentleman, which has attained such proportions that perhaps it might be thought to be an independent and self-supporting speech, is really deplorable. A right hon. Gentleman who leads the Opposition, and some day may well lead the House, puts forward a proposition which I think absolutely ruinous to our proceedings. I have been the subject of as much direct personal and individual attack as any man in this House, probably of more than any man in this House. That is so owing, among other things, to the circumstance that I was Irish Secretary at a time when feeling ran very high in Ireland, and naturally enough the Irish Government and the Minister responsibly identified with the Irish Government—especially identified with it—was subject to almost nightly attack. Never have I heard it laid down that I was bound to reply at once, although more important speeches might come, or there might be reason to think more important speeches might come, at a later stage of the proceedings. That is not all. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think there is no personal element in this vote of censure. He is quite wrong. This Resolution states precisely what was stated and put by you, Sir, from the Chair as a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the alleged conflicting utterances of the Prime Minister [OPPOSITION cries of "Ministers"], and if the contention of the right hon. Gentleman be accepted it appears to me that I should be expected to rise first on whatever day was selected, as I was expected to rise on Monday. I repudiate the doctrine absolutely, and nothing will induce me to depart from that position in any way. It is in the first place a gross violation of Parliamentary procedure to lay down that that is the rule; and if it were the rule, the sanction which it has received from hon. Gentlemen opposite is of a kind which should really receive the severest condemnation from the Leader of the Opposition if he desires, as I am sure he does desire, to see that our debates in this House are conducted fairly and decently. I should like to know whether I may gather from the right hon. Gentleman, who presumably does know the mind of his followers, whether we are to receive a fair hearing or not.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN rose again, but could not secure a hearing.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If he will inform me that to the best of his ability, and so far as his knowledge extends—[Cries of "Oh"]. I withdraw the term "to the best of his ability," because he has repudiated any influence in this matter with his friends. If he will tell me that to the best of his knowledge the debate will be fairly conducted on Tuesday, supposing Tuesday to be the day, or on any other day which is selected, I shall be glad to find an opportunity for the right hon. Gentleman; otherwise I cannot.

MR. CHURCHILL: Will you do the same?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We had better know how we stand. Is Tuesday to be given for this purpose?

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Are you going to give the pledge? [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no!"]

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I think it is a piece of gross impudence to ask it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no reason that I can see why anything should lead any Member to depart from the ordinary course of debate, if the right hon. Gentleman does not provoke it by departing from it himself.

Mr. CHURCHILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would himself use his influence with his own followers to procure a hearing for Members speaking from the Opposition side of the House upon points of order or other matters in the course of the debate.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that, though in somewhat grudging and stumbling language, the right hon. Gentleman has given the pledge. In that case I shall be quite ready to give Tuesday next.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS: Why did not you climb down at once?

Mr. CHURCHILL rose again.

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: A decision has been come to, and it seems undesirable to prolong this discussion.

Mr. CHURCHILL: On a point of order, you have allowed me, Sir, to put the Question to the right hon. Gentleman. May I not ask him whether he will endeavour to secure a fair hearing?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Clerk will now proceed to read the orders of the day.

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

Ordered, That the Minutes of the Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Telephones, in Session 1895, together with the Report of the said Committee, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Telephones, in Session 1898, together with the Report of the Committee, be referred to the Select Committee on the Post Office (Telephone Agreement).—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*)

SALE OF INTOXICANTS TO CHILDREN BILL [Lords].

Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

SUPPLY [8th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £13,950, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary in Dublin and London, and of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums."

***Mr. JOHN REDMOND** (Waterford) said one of the most serious results of the present system of the Government of Ireland was to be found in the fact that the discussions of Irish administration in Committee of Supply had been almost turned into a farce. Many millions of money were every year raised in Ireland, and by far the greater portion of the money so raised was spent in Irish administration, and he thought it was the universal belief by men of all Parties in Ireland that it was spent extravagantly and foolishly. Yet notwithstanding that fact it was impossible for Irish Members in any quarter of the House to obtain time to adequately discuss the various branches of Irish administration. Under the new rules of procedure twenty days were allocated for the discussion of Supply for all parts of the United Kingdom, and they had been able in recent years with difficulty to obtain sometimes three, and sometimes four days for the discussion of the Irish Estimates. He thought that even hon. Gentlemen opposite who differed so much from the Nationalists as to Irish policy would agree with him when he said that if they were to discuss these Estimates properly, with a view to effect economy in Irish administration, Irish Votes alone would require for discussion all the days that were given for the whole of Supply. The great majority of the Irish Votes passed without discussion. The result of the matter was that at the end of the session about five-sixths of the money voted for Irish administration was passed by the House under the closure without one single word of discussion. The Vote for the salary of the Chief Secretary was one upon which it was possible to discuss almost all questions of Irish administration—certainly all questions of Irish administration for which the Irish Executive represented by the Chief Secretary was in any sense responsible. And a general discussion was not a satisfactory thing, for each branch of Irish administration ought to be discussed separately. Irish Members had, however, no alternative but to initiate a general discussion, because the time at their disposal was so miserably inadequate.

The Chief Secretary had only held his office for a few weeks, and he presumed that the natural answer he would give to criticisms from these benches would be that he was not in office or personally responsible for these transactions, and that, indeed, he knew practically nothing about them. He was, in this respect, in the same position as every other Chief Secretary since the Union. The average official life of an Irish Secretary was about two years, and there had been about fifty-two or fifty-three Chief Secretaries. With one or two exceptions they had been all Englishmen sent over from this country to govern Ireland without any knowledge, and in most cases not having put their foot on the shores of Ireland before. Without impugning their sincerity and desire to do good for the country, he would say that the whole two years of their official existence had been spent in trying to learn something about the country they were set over. The very moment they were beginning to learn something about Ireland they were removed, and an entirely ignorant person was sent over to take their place. He was bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman had been charmingly candid. He went the other day to make a speech at the dinner given to him in the City of Dublin by those to whose service in Ireland he had devoted his sword. The first thing he said in his speech was that he was ignorant and incompetent to fulfil his duties. He said—

> "I have come to my office with no hope and no belief that I am in any way competent to adequately discharge the responsible duties placed upon me."

The modesty and honesty of the right hon. Gentleman almost disarmed criticism. But, from past experience, he was inclined to believe that such honesty and modesty would not be long-lived in his administration of Ireland. He asked English and Scottish Members whether they did not consider this an awful system that as soon as the Chief Secretary had, by patient work over in Ireland, begun to understand something about the country, he was at once removed? The truth was, of course, that the Chief Secretary was not the Governor of Ireland at all, and that, like his predecessors, he was only nominally responsible in that House for the Government of Ireland. Ireland was governed by forty odd semi-independent boards with permanent officials drawn entirely from one small section of the population who carried on the Government, of course, in sympathy with the aspirations and views of that small minority.

The right hon. Gentleman's own appointment—and of course he would be the last to deny it, if he spoke as candidly here as elsewhere—was a concession to that ascendancy faction in Ireland. His appointment, of course, heralded an entire change of policy. Almost his first official act was to go over to Dublin and make his vows to his new master, and to "kiss hands" on his appointment. In the first speech he delivered on Irish soil to the Irish people he said to his new masters, representing an insignificant fraction of the population of Ireland—

> "I only hope I may not fail in the expectations which you, my Lord Duke, and you, my Lords and gentlemen, have been good enough to indulge in with regard to me."

Let the Committee mark this was not, in fact, a representative gathering of the Protestants or Unionists of Ireland at all. It represented only an insignificant fraction of the population. One gentleman of whom personally he knew nothing, with more or less of an independent mind, but a well-known Unionist—Mr. Andrew Jameson—rose to make a speech, and because he ventured to give expression, very mildly and tentatively, to some more or less liberal views—remember he was a Unionist and an anti-Home Ruler—he was howled down. That was to say, he was treated with that amount of decency and want of fair play about which the Prime Minister had been lecturing the House that afternoon. He mentioned this fact in order to emphasise his statement that the right hon. Gentleman went over to Ireland to make his vows of allegiance to a small ring of the Unionists of Ireland, who had been in the past, and were now, the cause of all the trouble and mischief in Ireland. But having commenced with whispering humbleness by expressing the sincere hope that he might not fail in fulfilling the expectations formed of him by the noble Duke and Lords and gentlemen present, he then went on to explain to the Irish people, through this medium, what his new policy was. The first thing he did was to denounce and to pour unmeasured contempt upon the idea of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. The Chief Secretary was, he thought, a very shrewd and adroit man. He attributed these words to Lord Dunraven, but they were not Lord Dunraven's words at all, but the words of the Viceroy of Ireland under whom the right hon. Gentleman as his Chief Secretary was supposed to hold office. In 1902 Lord Dudley made a remarkable speech, speaking for himself and the Government as well. He said that—

> "The opinion of the Government was, and it was his opinion also, that the only way to govern Ireland properly was to govern it in accordance with Irish ideas."

And yet the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in his first speech after his appointment, poured ridicule upon the idea of governing Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas. He wanted to know what Irish ideas were. He said there were 1,250,000 of anti-Home Rulers in Ireland, and apparently his idea of governing Ireland properly was to govern it in accordance with the ideas of the minority as against the ideas of the majority. He said—

> "A careful perusal of Lord Dunraven's speech would show that he was drifting down that road which had been taken by all those who had begun their downward career by a policy of surrender to the forces of disorder."

That was to say that the Chief Secretary thought that to govern according to Irish ideas was to surrender to the forces of disorder. He continued—

> "Lord Dunraven had played a difficult and ungrateful part. He was not the first man who had carried on a campaign of law and order against disorder. He was not the first man who had thrown up the sponge. He told them to believe in another policy—the policy of governing Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas. What were Irish ideas? In the first place he took the population of Ireland. There was 1,250,000 of Unionists in Ireland; and the remainder, who were in the vast majority, held other ideas."

And so the right hon. Gentleman went on, in a long passage, to pour ridicule and contempt on the principle on which Lord Dudley had said that Ireland could alone be properly governed—viz., that it should be governed according to the opinions of the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman made no disguise of his real views; and he went on, in the most candid way possible, to lay down this formula. In place of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas his conception was to "tighten the chain." When he first read these words he was amazed, and was inclined to believe that they were a maladroit, or what he might call a somewhat stupid phrase which had escaped from the right hon. Gentleman. But it had been pointed out to him that the right hon. Gentleman was neither a maladroit nor a stupid man, and that he must have known the effect of the words which he used deliberately. The right hon. Gentleman used them deliberately to please the audience he was addressing, and to assert that his idea of governing Ireland was to tighten up the chain more firmly than ever. His words were—

> "Here I believe there is room for reform and amendment in the administration in Ireland. We must tighten up the chain, and if in that

Mr. John Redmond.

chain there is any weakening it must be strengthened."

He was inclined to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the candour of his speech. At any rate the right hon. Gentleman had let them know where they stood. He did not think it would be possible, after this confession of faith on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, to have any doubt whatever as to the opinions which he held.

He had some complaints to make with reference to the action of the right hon. Gentleman since he had taken up his present position, and the first was with reference to the working of the Land Act. He was bound to admit with all honesty that very largely the fault did not lie with the right hon. Gentleman personally, it was one connected with the Administration before he accepted office. He would not, therefore, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, seek to indict him or his policy in that respect. There were certain things in connection with the working of the Land Act he must allude to; and he was bound to admit, in candour, that the greater proportion of the fault rested not with the right hon. Gentleman personally, because they were faults committed before he came into office. He had stated, with reference to the most vital portions of the Land Act—the evicted tenants and the congested estates, and also the position of the non-judicial tenants—that the action of the Irish Executive had tended to the destruction of all hope of the Act bringing about any real settlement and peace and harmony between the different classes in Ireland. Three Commissioners were appointed to administer the Act. The largest and widest powers and discretion were given to them, and yet they found that on these vital portions of the Land Act they had had their discretion interfered with, they had had their powers cramped and confined, and they had had their action over-ridden and put on one side by the Executive. He knew he could not discuss the recent Report of the Commissioners at any length, but he contended that they could discuss any portion of that Report which bore on the action of the Irish Executive in the control of those Commissioners' action for which the Chief Secretary of the day was personally responsible.

It would be remembered that when the Bill was going through the House they received a pledge from the Member for Dover, which was renewed afterwards in the most formal way by the Attorney-General, that the regulations which were to be issued for the control and guidance of the Commissioners by the Executive would be placed upon the Table of the House, or, at any rate, that they would in some shape or form be published. They demanded the publication of these regulations, and the Member for Dover refused again and again to place them upon the Table, or to inform them as to their nature. They had nothing to go on but the vaguest rumours. They were refused that information, and all they knew was that there was a wide-spread belief in Ireland that the discretion of the Commissioners was being tampered and interfered with by orders from Dublin Castle; and, notwithstanding the pledge, these orders were withheld from them. When the present Chief Secretary came into office, and when they made this case, he answered them with perfect candour. He said he knew nothing about the past, he had not been concerned with it; but he thought the demand made for the publication of the regulations governing the Commissioners was a reasonable demand, and he would at once see that they were published. He had not fulfilled to the full and in the spirit that pledge, because what had he done? He said there ought to be no secrecy, he saw no reason for it, and he thought they ought to have full information as to these orders and regulations, and he promised that his first official duty would be to look into this matter and see that they got the information. What had he done? He had drafted a lot of new regulations, and it was those new regulations he had published, or at any rate promised to publish; but he had not published the old regulations issued by the late Chief Secretary and which were in operation up to the other day, and it was quite clear from the Report of the Commissioners that he did not intend to publish them. The demand which they had a right, he thought, to make was that everything connected with these regulations or orders which had interfered with the action of the Commissioners for the last year and a half should be published.

What occurred with reference to the evicted tenants? Everyone knew that, although the evicted tenants' question was in one sense a limited question, in another sense it was probably the most important of all questions in connection with the Land Act; because the main object of the Act was not merely to transfer the ownership of land from the landlord to the tenant, but to end the land war and bring about some appeasement of feeling in Ireland with happy consequences, as they all believed, to the country and everyone connected with Ireland; and so long as this evicted tenants' question was allowed to rankle there and fester as a sore this object could not be carried out. The Commissioners were impressed with that view, and they set to work to grapple with the matter. Considerable correspondence passed with the Treasury, which resulted in the issue of directions to the Commissioners last February to confine their inquiries to estates actually for sale before them. There was clear proof that the discretion of the Commissioners was interfered with by the action of the Executive, and he thought the pledge given that there should be no secrecy and that they should know what was actually done in the way of orders had been violated. He asked the right hon. Gentleman would he, in fulfilment of his pledge, produce the correspondence that had passed with the Treasury and make a clean breast of the whole matter. He might have a difficulty in the matter, because this took place before he came into office; but he definitely promised them in the House, in almost the first speech he made as Chief Secretary, that there should be no further secrecy in the matter, that they should know what was going on, that the regulations and orders issued should be given to them; and he (the hon. Member) submitted respectfully that he was not fulfilling in the spirit his pledge if he only gave them future regulations and withheld all information as to the regulations and other means whereby the Commissioners were prevented from putting the Act in operation in a way likely to bring about a successful issue with reference to evicted tenants.

There was one other matter connected with this Report to which he wished to refer, and that was the position of the non-judicial tenants, who were a numerous body. The Act provided that they were not to come within the operation of what was called the zones, that was to say, that in all cases of suggested sale inquiry and investigation should be instituted by the Commissioners into the security for the amount issued and into the equity of the price, and the Commissioners in their Report, at the end of page 3, said—

> "In the case of non-judicial holdings inspectors were required, in the instructions issued by the Commissioners in February, 1904, to inquire as to the security of each holding for the price agreed to. and as to the equity of the price to all persons interested, including the tenant purchaser. Subsequently, the interpretation of the law acted upon was that both in the case of non-judicial and judicial holdings the only questions which arose were the security to the State and the equity of the price to parties other than the vendor and purchaser."

He did not know whether hon. Members followed this, but it was really very simple. Let them take the case of a holding of a non-judicial tenant? The property in that was two-fold. There was the interest of the tenant, and that portion of the holding was his property now. There was also the interest of the landlord. The tenant proposed to purchase the interest of the landlord, and the Act provided that the Commissioners were to make an inquiry as to the security for the loan and as to the equity of the price; but by these new orders and directions, which had been issued and which, he claimed, should be published, they were to take into account the equity of the price so far as it affected everybody except the tenant. This meant that, although the tenant might pay a price which was really the price not only of his own interest but of the interest of the landlord as well, that was not to be taken into account at all so long as the whole holding was adequate security for the loan. This was not the intention of the House of Commons when the clause was passed, and manifestly a clause in that shape would never have been allowed to pass by Irish Members sitting on that side of the House; and if the law officers of the Crown, upon whose opinion he presumed this decision had been arrived at, thought they were right, at any rate they should have full information as to how it was arrived at and the reasons for it given in order to press for such amendment as was necessary to meet the case. The Commissioners in all these cases were over-ruled, and he thought it was a most unjust thing, not only to the Committee but to the Commissioners themselves, that full information should not be given as to the manner in which they were overruled, and as to the orders issued by the Government for that purpose.

He passed now to another subject, a subject in which the right hon. Gentleman was himself personally responsible to the full extent. He had to make a charge against the right hon. Gentleman of the most serious character. He charged the right hon. Gentleman with deliberately fostering the cry for coercion in Ireland and doing that not for the purpose of maintaining law and order, which were not threatened, or protection of life and property, which were not threatened, but for the purpose of compelling Sir Antony MacDonnell to resign his position. That was a serious charge.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Hear, hear!

*MR. JOHN REDMOND: Six or seven weeks ago, before anything of this kind became publicly mentioned in the papers, he was informed by those who had opportunity of knowing—not Sir Antony MacDonnell, from whom he had heard nothing, directly or indirectly — [Mr. WALTER LONG: Hear, hear!] and who were behind the scenes both in London and Ireland, that in view of the fact that Sir Antony had made a declaration that he would not administer coercion, a determination had been come to to force him out of Dublin Castle by forcing coercion upon certain parts of Ireland. He (Mr. Redmond) hardly thought it credible, but he was told to watch *The Times*, *Irish Times*, the *Globe*, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and of course he need hardly say it was necessary to watch the Unionist Members opposite. Almost immediately after that communication *The Times* began to write upon the subject. The Dublin correspondent of *The Times* day after day sent letters, sometimes of a column in length, describing alleged outrages. That was followed up in the *Globe* and the *Irish Times*. After a time they came down from generalisations to particular instances, and most Members would remember the sensation created in London by the account which appeared in the papers of a midnight attack on the house of a Mr. Persse, in Galway, by a body of armed men who fired into the house and who were only routed by the bravery and valour of Mr. Persse and a few friends. That case was commented upon, and he was not sure that it was not treated pictorially in some of the weekly journals. The changes were rung upon it for a week, and then it was investigated by the right hon. Gentleman and the police of Ireland, and it was found that the whole story was an invention, and nothing of the kind had occurred at all. Then there was a sensational account of alleged houghing and mutilation of cattle—a crime which should be denounced as horrible, shocking, un-Christian, and detestable. This case was investigated, and it was found there was not a single case of a beast being houghed or mutilated. Then they had stories of incendiary fires. He must express his opinion that it was dastardly for people either in the public Press or in that House or out of that House to take part in any conspiracy of this kind, seeking to blacken the reputation of a people who, so far as outrages and crime were considered, stood on a higher position than the people of either England or Scotland. The hon. Member (Mr. Redmond) then read extracts from the declarations of Judges at the recent Spring Assizes in the counties alleged to be disturbed to show that there was no evidence of an outbreak of crime and disturbance in any part of the country. The newly appointed County Court Judge of Roscommon, Mr. Wakeley, said the other day there was a conspiracy in England to misrepresent Ireland, and though he was a gentleman bitterly opposed to him in politics, Mr. Wakeley said he should always take the opportunity of standing up for the Irish people. Lord Dunraven gave the same testimony in his pamphlet, in which he said a certain section of Unionists had been too busy painting in too lurid colours the condition of Ireland. An isolated case might be quoted, but was that fair in dealing with one country and another. Only the other day he read of a case of cattle mutilation in Sunderland, a case where a farmer had placed some calves in a shed overnight, one of the calves was missing in the morning, and the farmer traced it to a field near at hand where he found it with its hind legs cut off. He was not so foolish or unjust as to found any argument upon that case. These offences were bound to occur in every community now and then, but thank God not often. But supposing Ireland was governing this country under coercion and that trial by jury could be suspended at the will of a single man, would it be fair to ring the changes upon the case and to publish it and then to say, "This is a horrible condition of crime in England."

Questions had been asked recently about a Return of the agrarian outrages in Ireland. He sympathised with his hon. friend who asked why this Return was made at all. For example, if a man's hay was burned, or something of that kind, why was that to be put down as an agrarian offence without evidence? And why should there be this Return for Ireland more than for any other country? This Return for 1904 showed there were 206 agrarian outrages in Ireland during the last twelve months. Of those 206 outrages 124 were classed as intimidation, and of those 105 were cases of sending threatening letters. Was it not a cruel thing to charge against Ireland 124 cases of agrarian intimidation, thereby leading people to believe that serious offences had been committed, when 105 of those cases were threatening letters? He believed that this session he had received certainly 105 threatening letters, bearing English postmarks. In fact, he never made a speech in this House that he did not receive shoals of letters and postcards of a threatening character, some of which did not come stamped. He received most abusive and threatening letters of all kinds; threatening not only eternal damnation, but all pains and penalties of this life, for his having expressed opinions and convictions which were not shared by the senders. If these cases were all reported to the police and solemnly put into a Return as outrages what a farce it would be. Yet it was on a string of figures like this that the Committee were asked to believe that agrarian outrages existed in Ireland. Agrarian crime did not exist in Ireland. There was no such thing. He found further down in the Return, under the head of injuries to property, thirteen cases! Thirteen cases in twelve months amongst a population of 4,500,000! The Return showed nothing. If they went to the general criminal statistics, they would find that Ireland stood far above either England and Scotland not only in the matter of serious crimes, but of all crimes.

Coming back to his charge against the right hon. Gentleman, he said that since the right hon. Gentleman had been made Chief Secretary he had pandered to those who had endeavoured to raise the cry that Ireland was in a state of disturbance and that coercion must be put into force. He had done so by his speeches, in which he had never failed to say something about the necessity of maintaining law and order. The right hon. Gentleman had done that in order to pander to the attempt that was being made to force coercion on Ireland. But the right hon. Gentleman had done more than that; he had drafted hundreds of extra police into this district of county Galway, with the object of creating the idea that it was necessary to take some steps to protect life and property, when he could not quote an instance where the life and property of any man in that district had been threatened. What else had the right hon. Gentleman done? He had created a little reign of terror there with these policemen. Would it be believed that the innocent recreation of playing a band along a country road was forbidden in this district? A band recently had proceeded a short way along a country road when it was met by some police and ordered to stop playing and to go back. The men ceased playing and turned back along the road, and the police came after them and turned upon them and broke up their instruments, and then these men for whom their neighbours had subscribed money to buy a new drum and other instruments, were told if they brought the band out again, during the day or night, anywhere in that district, the instruments would be broken up again.

The right hon. Gentleman also employed the police in their spare time in making domiciliary visits all through that district. The right hon. Gentleman in this House recently tried to turn the matter off with a laugh, but it was too serious a matter. Could anyone imagine anything more irritating, more maddening to the people of a district where no disturbance existed at the present moment than domiciliary visits being made at all hours of the day and night? The right hon. Gentleman admitted that some visits were made by night, but said they were not made at any hour when people ought to be in bed? What right had he to say at what hour the people should be in bed. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that one visit was made at 10.30 at night, hours after many of these people were in bed. He warned the right hon. Gentleman that by proceedings of this kind he might create in that part of Ireland a state of things which he had assumed had been in existence for some time. The right hon. Gentleman had also instituted proceedings at law against certain persons in this district. Against that he had nothing to say. If men offended against the law let them be tried fairly and impartially. In this country in cases of this kind men were made amenable to the law by being summoned before a magistrate and sent to trial in serious cases, and the right hon. Gentleman tried that procedure in some parts of this district, but he had now mended his plan. The right hon. Gentleman was now engaged in a most provocative course of procedure, viz., arresting these people in their homes, taking them before magistrates, and then, when they were committed for trial, releasing them again. Why was that done? Did the right hon. Gentleman think that these people were going to run away to America to avoid his summonses? No such preposterous claim could be put forward. Why did he not summon these men instead of arresting them and dragging them from their homes? On May 1st, between the hours of four and six in the morning, thirteen men were dragged from their beds by the police, taken a long distance to Ballinasloe, given no food, brought before a magistrate, returned for trial, and then at once released. Could anything be more provocative? Why were not these men summoned? Or if it was necessary to arrest them, why should the proceedings be carried out in the middle of the night? If the right hon. Gentleman allowed his advisers to lead him into courses of that kind he would create disorder. [" That is what he wants."] It was absurd to imagine that such proceedings could be carried on without the most provocative effect upon the whole people.

He respectfully warned the right hon. Gentleman that he ought not to allow himself to be drawn along this road. He gave that warning quite disinterestedly as he had never concealed his belief that the national movement in Ireland was generally strengthened by coercion. Whereever the national movement was somewhat apathetic, the one infallible remedy to stimulate it into action was a little of the salt of coercion. Therefore in giving this advice he was not thinking of the immediate prospects of the national movement. He took a wider and graver view of his responsibilities. He was one of those who looked forward to the day when there would be a possibility of reconciliation between the two nations, when the people of this country might get better and truer information about Ireland, when they would see in a truer light the facts of the Irish situation, and understand more clearly the true meaning of the forces represented by hon. Gentlemen opposite; and when, on the other hand, the people of Ireland would be able to take perhaps a fairer or more generous view of the mistakes committed by this country. He spoke for himself in saying that, and it was unnecessary to add that such a reconciliation could take place only on conditions which would leave Ireland free for the management of her own affairs.

With all seriousness he warned the right hon. Gentleman that the road along which he was being pushed was a fatal road. He was being made the servant, not of the Unionist Party in Ireland, but of a section of that Party, which all through the history of Ireland had the same record—a section of men who had no country and no cause, whose one political creed was greed, and who to-day were just the same as they were a hundred years ago. He would read to the Committee an extract from a letter written in 1792 by Mr. Edmund Burke to Mr. Dundas, Secretary for Ireland. At that time the Irish Parliament was beginning to see its way towards loosening the chains on the Catholics of Ireland, the Catholic Emancipation Act of the following year was beginning to be discussed. It was a Protestant Parliament, and although as a whole it was in favour of this extension of the liberties of Catholics, there was a powerful section who were bitterly opposed to it, and who threatened Mr. Dundas with what they would do if the loosening of the bonds of the Catholics permitted any interference with their monopoly of place and power. They were then strenuous upholders of the Irish Parliament and called themselves Irish Nationalists, but they told Mr. Dundas that if this policy went on they would cease to support the Irish Parliament and become Unionists. Mr. Burke wrote as follows—

> "If Mr. Hobart is not somewhat mistaken in his accounts of the disposition of the Council of the Lords and Commons of Ireland it is not much to their advantage. Rather than admit of the least participation in their privileges they are ready to abandon them altogether, to shut up their Parliament House, and to become a province of England. If you had a mind to answer peevishness in kind you would tell them that the sooner they execute their resolution the better, that they have been long enough the curse, the scourge, and the bane of the Irish nation, and that never having performed one act of real legislation, when they are called upon to adopt a measure of justice, dictated by the circumstances of the times, they resent as an outrage an attempt to render them at least of some use to their unhappy country. They actually threaten if you do not behave better to quarrel with their places and pensions, to surrender with disdain their charter of monopoly and to break up the great staple trade, never carried on to its full perfection but in Ireland, of the whole art and mystery of jobbery.

That was Burke's description of the small section of the Protestants of Ireland who formed the ascendancy faction in that day. Their lineal successors in Irish politics were animated by just the same spirit, and if the right hon. Gentleman allowed them to push him along the road instead of exercising an independent judgment, his career in Ireland would end, as the career of so many of his predecessors had ended, in ruin for the interests of law and order and good government, and probably disgrace to himself. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chief Secretary."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.) joined in the wish of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford that the time might soon come when the people of this country, by a wider diffusion of true information, would understand the real position of affairs in Ireland. Irish Unionists had never concealed what the true facts were. At the time of the Home Rule controversies, as soon as the true facts of the case were brought home to the people of Great Britain, Irish Unionists were able, simply owing to the spread of truth, to secure a verdict in their favour, and the same result would happen again. While he regarded as a base and unworthy charge the accusation that the Chief Secretary had manufactured the cases referred to by the hon. Member for the purpose of evoking the special provisions of the Crimes Act, he congratulated his right hon. friend on the fact that such a speech had been made against him. It was some time since charges of corrupt administration had been brought against the chief executive officer of the Irish Government, and the more such charges were made against the Chief Secretary the greater confidence would Irish Unionists feel in him. Speeches such as that just delivered would do the right hon. Gentleman a great deal of good in Ireland, and, when analysed, no harm in England.

The hon. and learned Member had said with truth that there had been a change of policy in Ireland. There had indeed been a most satisfactory change of policy. Owing to the action of the right hon. Gentleman during his short tenure of office there had grown up a marked feeling of confidence in those very parts of Ireland and among those very classes of the people which it was the duty of a Unionist Administration to encourage. The object of Irish Unionists was to secure in every part of Ireland an absolutely impartial administration of the law. Under a former *régime* there had been grounds for suspecting that the administration was not impartial, but within the last two months a most marked change had come over the feelings of those who had a stake in the country, shopkeepers as well as landlords believing that the law was going to be enforced irrespective of persons.

He would ask the hon. and learned Member for Waterford to forgive him for not going into detail in reference to the topics to which he had alluded, but there were some other topics upon which he desired to say something. He thought that when the matter came to be considered in England the gravamen of the charges which had been made against the Chief Secretary would scarcely bear close examination. One complaint made by the hon. and learned Member was that in a certain district in Galway the police made domiciliary visits at 10.30 at night. Was that a crime on the part of the police whose duty it was to preserve the peace of the district? Was it a crime for these men to knock at the doors of certain houses to make inquiries, more especially when this was done, as had been stated by the Chief Secretary, with the consent of the occupiers. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that if he found that the system being pursued on this matter constituted an intrusion he would have it stopped wherever there was a grievance. Then it was said that certain men should be made amenable to the ordinary law. It appeared that in one case some eleven or twelve men, instead of being summoned before the magistrate in the usual way, were arrested and taken out of their houses early in the morning. As in this case the men were liberated on bail almost immediately, he did not think there was very much of a grievance in that. The explanation of this case had been given in the House that day. These men were arrested at a very early hour. In Ireland it was in the discretion of the magistrates whether a person should be brought up by arrest or by a summons, and these men were arrested, upon the statement of the officer responsible to this House in order to avoid a tumultuous assembly. If in order to avoid a breach of the peace it was considered necessary to arrest certain men he thought hon. Members would agree with him that there was nothing very serious in that. Then there was the band, which the hon. and learned Member appeared to think was a very harsh case. They knew how innocent some of these transactions could be made to look. He said that this band was going through an uninhabited part of the country. He thought the hon. and learned Member was going to tell them the whole of the facts but he had omitted some very material facts. He did not say where this band was going. They had announced their intention of holding a musical demonstration at a farm in possession of a man whom the United Irish League were terrorising.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I do not accept that statement.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.) said there was no meeting on that occasion.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: No, there was no meeting because before the band got there it was stopped by the police, and that was what the hon. and learned Member had complained of. The police acted with the most perfect propriety. This was a band which intended to intimidate a man who had as much right to carry on his trade without any intimidation as any man in this country, and when a band set out, in defiance of the warning and the proclamation issued by the police, to serenade with the object of attracting a crowd, he thought the police were justified in interfering.

There was another matter upon which he desired to express his approval of the action of the Irish Executive, and that was in connection with the landing of the sheriff on Dursey Island. He was surprised that the hon. and learned Member had not drawn attention to the matter. In this case the sheriff went to the island in an Admiralty gunboat called the "Storm Cock," and, resistance being offered, he was protected by the police, when he proceeded to execute the writ of the King's Court. The duty of a sheriff was a very unpleasant one, and he quite agreed that there was not likely to be anybody in that House who did not sympathise with the poor people. The officers had of course to do their duty and obey the orders of the highest Court of the land. Nobody could say that they were guilty of misdemeanour in doing so. What was the law? Lord Chief-Baron Palles' opinion on the subject was as follows. Speaking previous to sentencing prisoners found guilty of wilfully obstructing the sheriff in the execution of his duty, he said—

> "Speaking generally for the purpose of pointing my observations to the matter in hand, I may state that upon each of these occasions when the sheriff arrived with his force for the purpose of executing those writs, there were attempts by his bailiffs to execute them, that such bailiffs were assaulted in their attempted execution of those writs, and that that attempted execution, and the assaults upon the bailiff consequent upon it, lasted for a period upon each occasion of about an hour. During the entire of that time the Royal Irish Constabulary, standing there under the orders of the county inspectors, did not move. No order was given to them by the magistrate in command for one whole hour, during which the officer of the Queen was attempting to execute Her Majesty's writ. For one whole hour breaches of the peace, in gross and open violation of the law, in contempt of the authority of the Queen, and of her mandate to the sheriff, were persisted in, in the presence of that strong force of constabulary, and they did nothing. Upon, as I understand it, the conclusion of that period, orders were given to them by the resident magistrates, and the moment those orders were given they performed their duty, not only with a promptitude and courage which cannot be too highly commended, but with a remarkable amount of patience and forbearance, clearly evidenced by the fact that of the several thousands constituting the riotous mobs upon the occasions in question there is no suggestion that injury was suffered by one. In the observations I make I advisedly exclude all reference to the military. Their officers were bound to wait for the command of the civil authority. I advisedly also refrain from referring to subordinate officers, to district inspectors, and the sergeants and men of the constabulary who were under their control. They were bound to wait for the orders of the county inspectors. My observations are pointed, in the first instance, to the two county inspectors and to the two resident magistrates then present, and only upon the hypothesis that they were acting without orders and upon their own responsibility. If they acted upon orders, far be it from me to make the slightest reflection upon them, because they were obeying the dictates of their superiors. But I take leave to say that in point of law, no illegal order or unconstitutional order, given by an official—be he Inspector-General, or, going higher, even Under-Secretary or Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant—can justify any man in the violation of the law; and howsoever high the position of these officials may be, they are bound by our Constitution to obey the law in the same way as the humblest man who walks the streets."

That was what a Judge of the High Court had said. It was obviously a breach of the duty of any official or other person to disobey the decree of the King's Court. And to have it said, as had been said in the class of literature to which he had referred, that in landing a force on Dursey Island to carry out the decree of the King's Bench Division was a scandal—that was an absolute misrepresentation of the case.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the hon. Gentleman tell me in reference to that charge is it not a charge of Chief Baron Palles given at the Winter Assizes at Sligo in 1887, and was not that charge in condemnation of the Executive Government of the time?

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would like to read it?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I know it.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he would now pass to another matter, one in reference to the Estates Commissioners. He thought that the arrival of the Chief Secretary in Ireland had done a great deal towards influencing for the better the action of the Estates Commissioners. A very significant fact with regard to the Estates Commissioners would be found in this. As the Act of 1903 was passed, the House would remember that there were two ways in which a man could get rid of his land. He could either deal direct with his tenants or he could sell to his tenants by selling in bulk in the first instance to the

Estates Commissioners, and a very good clue to the confidence which at the start of the Act was felt by the general public who had land to sell was this, that practically, except in those parts of Ireland where intimidation was rife, everyone refused to sell to the Estates Commissioners. Nearly everybody preferred to negotiate with his tenants himself, and conversely when they got to Connaught and to the very place where intimidation was rife they found the local bodies—branches of the United Irish League and in other places, Town Tenants' Leagues—in Tipperary and Cork cases were brought to his knowledge—they were insisting that they would in no way deal unless the sale was made through the Estates Commissioners. He thought if a Return were published the number of estates outside Connaught sold to the Commissioners would be limited to something under ten. And unfortunately there was a great deal of idea abroad that the Estates Commissioners were very apt to lend themselves to the local behests of the United Irish League. He was glad to say that that had been altered. The other day the Estates Commissioners for the first time published a circular which had reference to the proceedings in the West of Ireland—a most proper circular, and the only misfortune was that it was not published twelve months ago—that where they found that local intimidation was on foot for the purpose of forcing the owners to sell the land to themselves (the Estates Commissioners) they would absolutely decline to deal.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Was that a circular or a letter?

MR. WILLIAM MOORE thought the hon. Member was right. It was a letter which appeared in the papers and which was published, he supposed, by the Commissioners or by the Executive, and it appeared in the whole of the Irish Press. With regard to the question of the Estates Commissioners, as they all knew they had a very strong power and he would like to know in a particular case which had attracted a great deal of public attention how it was going to be exercised. It was a case which had been brought several times before the House by Question and Answer by his hon. friends. The Commissioners had the power of deciding what part of a landlord's estate was to constitute an estate for the purposes of the Act, and the importance of the decision on that was this, that unless they declared the bit which the landlord was able to sell an estate he would get no bonus and practically there would be no sale. He found that on an estate in Cork—the Arnott estate——

MR. DILLON: A very interesting point of order arises here, and we should be clear upon it. I perceive that the hon. and learned Member is going to discuss in detail the action of the Estates Commissioners. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford discussed the action of the Estates Commissioners in so far as, according to their Report, it had been dictated by the regulations of the Executive. The hon. and learned Member opposite is going a step further, and is discussing the powers of the Estates Commissioners and the action they have taken on their own responsibility.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): This is a matter which is *sub judice.*

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: If the case is *sub judice* certainly it cannot be discussed. Nor do I think the action of the Estates Commissioners can be gone into in detail as the hon. Gentleman proposes. The action of the Commissioners, I understand, is like that of a legal Court. [NATIONALIST cries of "No, no!"]

MR. DILLON: It is not in that sense a legal Court. It is subject to the Executive and the criticism of this House. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford guarded himself specially and said he was entitled to discuss the action of the Commissioners in so far as, according to their Report, that action had been coerced or dictated by the Executive Government. The hon. Member opposite is going a step further than that. He is discussing the action of the Commissioners in so far as they are acting independently and on their own judgment. I do not object in the least, but I only want to know whether we will be at liberty to answer it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I hope you will give no decision which will bar the way to the discussion of Section 5 where the Executive have interfered with the Estates Commissioners and reversed their proceedings. That is a wholly different thing.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): That is also *sub judice.*

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: In so far as it is merely an administrative operation I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that that will come more appropriately on the Vote for the Commissioners.

MR. DILLON: I take exception to the statement of the Attorney-General.

MR. ATKINSON: I mean the construction of Section 5 is *sub judice.*

MR. DILLON: No, Sir, the Executive Government has decided the question. We must be allowed to challenge that.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I do not wish to go into further details on this point.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Surely it is not in order that on a matter affecting the administration of public money, which is at the present moment before a tribunal, whether it be a legal or administrative tribunal, a discussion should take place for the purpose of affecting that body with reference to the particular distribution of the money.

MR. DILLON: This is an important question, and the Chairman is in a difficult position when asked to decide upon it, because it all depends on the construction of an Act of Parliament which we have followed very closely and which may not be so familiarly known to the Chairman. I differ from the hon. Member for North Louth. This strikes at the promise given to us that the whole of the proceedings of the Commissioners in all their details should be submitted to the judgment and criticism of the House of Commons. We have that promised most clearly in the wording of the Act and in the promises of Ministers. The proceedings of the Commissioners are not those of a judicial body in the sense that they are withdrawn from the consideration of this House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There is no difference between the hon. Member for Mayo and myself. I think we have a right to object to the hon. and learned Member opposite discussing a particular matter which is really intended to prejudice the tenants' side of the question in the Arnott Estate case.

MR. ATKINSON: It is quite true that the Commissioners are not wholly in the position of Judges. It is quite true that some of them are under the control of the Executive and some of them guided by the regulations but, at the time they are judicial in this sense, that they have to decide certain applications that come before them upon facts that come before them, and while they are deciding these applications, I submit that they are in the same position as any other judicial authority, and that you should not discuss the matter of that application.

MR. DILLON: I absolutely protest against this interpretation made by the Attorney-General.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: If the Commissioners are acting under the responsibility of the Executive, of course their actions can be discussed. If the case is *sub judice*, of course it cannot be discussed.

MR. DILLON: But what is the meaning of *sub judice*? I cannot allow it to pass without protesting against the assumption of the Attorney-General that the action of the Commissioners is withdrawn from the discussion of the House of Commons.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S): I venture to hope that the hon. Member opposite will not carry this further. I think the point is important, and it requires serious consideration before a conclusion is reached.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said he would not state anything that was to the prejudice of the case. What he was about to bring to the notice of the Committee was a certain statement made in regard to this estate that the Commissioners had acted in a particular way. If the statement were true, he thought it was a case in which the Executive should exercise their control. In deference to the hon. Member he did not put it further than that.

He came now to the question of the constabulary. He thought that the feeling in the force, so far as he could see, was greatly improved during the last couple of months. The constables had more confidence that they would be protected—a confidence which unfortunately previous to this they had largely lost. From all he could find out—and he had been talking to some of them—he believed a great deal had been done in the way of strengthening the *esprit de corps* between the officers and men, and the belief was now much more general than it was formerly that they would be protected in the discharge of their duty. He saw the other day at Limerick an application was made in the matter of some malicious incendiarism, and the application was tried before County Court Judge Adams. Judge Adams they all knew, and he did not suggest that he had any prejudices or sympathies. If he had, hon. Members opposite would agree that they rather lay with the Nationalist Members. A police sergeant went before the Judge and stated that he believed the application was a bogus one. If the Judge had acted on that evidence there would not be another word to say, but the Judge said he had no doubt malice had been proved and injury had taken place, but he held there was not a tittle of evidence to support the constable's statement. That was an extraordinary thing to happen, coming as the statement did from a constable who was supposed to know the district. It was a matter that should be investigated, and if any investigation had taken place he should be very glad to know the result. The Chief Secretary had behind him the fullest approval of those who wished to see the law enforced, particularly in regard to public meetings in those districts in the West of Ireland where unfortunately intimidation prevailed. He did not wish to see the right of public meeting prevented, but it had been properly prevented where, in the judgment of those responsible for the peace of the country, it would lead to a breach of the peace. He had no doubt that a great many of the constituents of Members opposite who wanted security for themselves would also support the Chief Secretary in this matter. It was also satisfactory to find district inspectors and county inspectors and the force generally were not intimidated by the fact that a gentleman, knowing what he was about, had committed a breach of the law, from doing their duty. So long as that course was pursued, the right hon. Gentleman would have the support of the Members from Ireland who sat on those benches.

There was a case also where local justices refused to attest a recruit for service in the Army. The men who did that were not fit to hold the commission of the peace. It was clearly a matter which ought to receive the attention of the Chief Secretary. There were also cases in which justices were very apt to act, and especially ex-officio justices, in defiance of evidence. He knew it was a delicate subject to touch, but there were cases which were too plain. He referred to one case where the defendant admitted he committed the offence, and yet the magistrates ordered his acquittal. There was a case at Westport. A Bible-reader met a Roman Catholic clergyman and assaulted him, as he admitted. The case came before the magistrates, three in number. They unanimously acquitted the prisoner, although he said he assaulted the man and would do so again. That carried the law into contempt. He noticed in the same week a priest was assaulted in the street in Belfast, the defendant holding a Bible close to the priest's nose, saying he was in need of it. Although he had not laid a hand upon the priest he was fined 40s. or a month's imprisonment with hard labour. This showed that the law was administered in one way at Westport and in another way at Belfast. Where there was open disregard of evidence in law the Lord-Chancellor should take action and remove these gentlemen from the administration of justice. After all, the administration of local justice went to the security and contentment of Ireland.

He and his friends heartily approved of the new policy that had been carried out during the past six weeks. The first consideration for the country was the observance and enforcement of the law of the land. If that was successfully asserted, he had no doubt the Chief Secretary would carry out to the full the policy which, up to the present, they had earnestly hoped the right hon. Gentleman would develop—namely, the industrial side. Last night, so far as the Bann was concerned, they had had an offer from the right hon. Gentleman to reorganise the whole drainage system of Ireland. He did not say that that was very much, but, at any rate, if the Nationalists insisted in paralysing the executive officers of the Crown by acting in defiance of the forces of law and order in the country, it was obvious that they were delaying the industrial development of Ireland. The hon. Member for Mayo had been good enough to give him notice that he intended to attack him in regard to what he had said about Sir Antony MacDonnell. What he said and what he still said about the Under-Secretary's position in regard to the unhappy Anderson case was this,—parenthetically he might say that he did not think it was very useful to the Under-Secretary that this case should be so constantly dragged in. He maintained that everything which he had said was absolutely true.

MR. DILLON said that all he wanted was to see that the truth prevailed.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said he also desired that. What he had stated was that the Under-Secretary was directly responsible for the dismissal of Constable Anderson on the identical evidence on which that man was afterwards reinstated. Of course, he was aware that the Chief Secretary was, in constitutional law, responsible for the acts of his subordinate; but in dealing with that charge he was dealing with actual responsibility. On June 26th the late Chief Secretary the Member for Dover said that he was first cognisant of the matter in the month of February; and that was supplemented afterwards by saying that he had never heard a word about the case until February. Whatever that right hon. Gentleman's responsibility might be it was limited till after February. Who, then, did deal with Constable Anderson? It was the Under-Secretary and the Inspector-General. What were the facts? This man was dismissed in December. On January 2nd a letter was written by his solicitor enclosing a medical certificate which was received in Dublin Castle on January 3rd. It was this medical certificate which induced the right hon. Member for Dover to reinstate Anderson. According to the statement of the right hon. Member for Dover the police records of Anderson were for seventeen and a-half years perfectly clear.

MR. DILLON said he did not dispute that the late Chief Secretary said that Anderson's record was perfectly clear; but he knew that it was not.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said he thought that was hardly a generous way of dealing with this matter. The late Chief Secretary said that the man's record was perfectly clear, and he reinstated him on the medical certificate after consultation with the law officers of the Crown, who revised the case, and who advised him that on the evidence the man should not have been convicted. Why did not the Under-Secretary consult the law officers? Up to the dismissal of Anderson the Under-Secretary could only have communicated with the Rev. Mr. O'Hara. What communications passed between the Rev. Mr. O'Hara and the Under-Secretary? He was privately informed that in spite of this man's record every effort was made to rake up scandals against him until January 23rd, when it was stated that the medical certificate on which the whole case turned had no bearing on it and that the dismissal accordingly stood. That letter was drafted by the Inspector-General and submitted for approval to Sir Antony MacDonnell. That proved the whole case to the hilt. He himself felt so much approval of the change which had taken place in affairs in Ireland that he regretted he was not able to vote for the salary of the Chief Secretary. If it were only a personal matter he would vote with a heart and a-half, but voting would involve an expression of confidence in the Irish Administration, all the members of which were not responsible to this House. The Lord-Lieutenant was a most generous and lavish entertainer, but they had no confidence in his political opinion. Then there was Sir Horace Plunkett, and he did not know what the present opinion of Sir Horace Plunkett might be, but at one time he was in open sympathy with the Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Dunraven. Further, the Under-Secretary was the actual draftsman of the devolution scheme. All these excellent officials were opposed to Unionist policy. In these circumstances, it would be impossible for Ulster Unionist Members to vote for the Chief Secretary's salary.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said in days long gone by he once heard Mr. Disraeli remind the Members sitting behind him that this country was not governed by logic. He thought the Chief Secretary for Ireland, after listening to the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim, would be inclined to believe in that statement; for, that he should be deprived of his salary because of certain views of Lord Dudley, whose salary was not involved, Sir Horace Plunkett, whose salary was not involved, and Sir Antony MacDonnell, whose salary was not involved, was certainly one of the most illogical things ever submitted to the House of Commons. Truly, the official Unionists of Ulster were fearfully and wonderfully made, and had their own ideas of logic, no doubt. He agreed in one thing, and that only, with the hon. Member. He said that a great change had come over Irish policy. It was true. He noticed, however, that the hon. and learned Member never suggested any change until the Land Act was passed, and he got thirty-one years purchase for land he had offered for twenty before it was passed.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: The hon. Member has told the story so often that he believes it, but it is not the case. He has been misinformed.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I have the hon. Member's letters. I say we never heard a whisper of new policy until the Irish landlords, the hon. and learned Member included, got their purses well lined. They spoke out when the new policy involved justice to other parties.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: How about the thirty-one years? Do you withdraw that?

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I have the letters.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: I defy him to produce the letters. I am prepared to go into the whole history of my estate; every tenant was satisfied and I have forty-two.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: If I have made an error in thirty-one instead of thirty——

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: If a charge is made against an hon. Member which he repudiates it is usual to accept his statement.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said he withdrew his statement so far as the thirty-one years was concerned. If the hon. Member had any refuge behind that he might take it. His case was this, and it included every Irish landlord who was now to the front of this new policy, they never complained of the old policy until the Land Act was passed which filled their pockets out of the funds of this country. It recalled the time when Lord Cornwallis wrote to the Duke of Portland with regard to the negotiations for the Act of Union—

> "You cannot believe how I loathe the men with whom I have to treat, and how I should like to kick them."

The leopard had not changed his spots. The hon. Member made a side attack on the Estates Commissioners. He did not take a reasonable view of their explanation or what would be their explanation. He said the general public distrusted the Estates Commissioners, and that practically no land had been sold to them as the Act authorised and provided.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: I said, in those districts free from intimidation.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Why did the landlords prefer to sell direct to the tenant? There were great inducements given for sales to the Commissioners. A great deal of the expense was borne by the Commissioners. Why did not the landlords deal with them. They knew the Commissioners inquired into the value of land before they purchased. They knew they would not get the price out of the Commissioners which they could wring out of the tenants. That was the reason why the landlords had set aside that portion of the Act.

The hon. and learned Member, in his long speech, had gone over a large number of items. Let him say this to the House. He had been a Member for twenty years. He had heard debates on the Chief Secretary's salary which were debates indeed. He had lived through times of outrage and crime in Ireland, and intimidation that could be called such. But what was the case now? Contrast past times to this. Contrast the debates of old and horrors of old with what they had heard that day. Was it not ludicrous? The Judges were going through Ireland receiving white gloves, and declaring the country practically crimeless. There was one spot in which it was alleged there had been intimidation. The whole of the country except that spot was perfectly peaceable and perfectly quiet. What did this reorganisation of the Unionist forces in Ireland mean? There was a perfectly plain and clear meaning to everyone who chose to go beneath the surface. He was a somewhat old electioneerer. He had been in a good many battles and he could tell the House what it all meant. He would tell the House what this conspiracy to libel a country which was perfectly crimeless and clear from outrage meant. Those Gentlemen were politically played out and they knew it. When they were down in their luck electorally they tried Home Rule. They raised the Home Rule bogey. That was the way to frighten Englishmen. They did not care about other things. They had broken their pledges—they were played out, and being so they raised the Home Rule bogey. "Let us," they said, "take that through England. Let us send the Member for North Antrim through England with the Anderson case or with the Ballinasloe doctor's case." He had been more through England than ever the hon. Member had. He had fought a good many more battles than he had fought or ever would fight. The English people would not be deceived by him now as they were in 1886. They would not be deceived by these bogus charges—by this new election conspiracy which had been got up for political purposes. It was a scandal that a country should be libelled and defamed by newspapers and politicians without the slightest cause.

Now he rose for the purpose of asking two Questions of the Chief Secretary. He wanted to put down cases to him very explicitly, and he asked for a plain answer. The Chief Secretary had been at Dublin, and he (Mr. Russell) had noticed the company that surrounded him—landlords and agents and men connected with Irish land. That was the company he had got into. It was the beginning of the Chief Secretary's term of office, and he had no right to give him advice. He had known him for a long time and he wished to say frankly that he had no desire to obstruct him in his work, and he had no sympathy with bigotry and outrage. He had voted against these things all his life and he was as bitterly hostile to them to-day as ever he was. From him the Chief Secretary would find no difficulties in these matters. He himself admitted that, as administrator of the law in Ireland, the Chief Secretary was bound by the law. He, however, wanted to be frank and fair with the other side. The Chief Secretary would admit, he thought, that it was of the utmost importance that at this juncture in Irish affairs he should strive to steer an even keel.

The first Question he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman was a Question regarding the action of the Executive in reference to the alteration of the Commissioners findings in regard to Section 5 of the Land Act. It the House would permit him for a few moments he would like to make the case clear. When the Land Act was debated in Committee in 1903, a clause stood which placed all rents of whatever kind under the zones. Three nights were spent in the House endeavouring to alter the zones. They failed to alter them. But the Chief Secretary on the third night made a great concession. He declined to alter the zones, but on an Amendment of his (Mr. Russell's) he agreed to strike out from the zones all the non-judicial tenants. Their case was that these non-judicial tenants who had never had rents fixed ought not to come under the zones because their rents were too high, and that they ought not to be treated on the same plane as judicial tenants. The Chief Secretary gave way on that, and he exempted from the zones all non-judicial tenants and promised to treat them in a different way. What took place was this: a new clause was brought up and that clause now stood as Section 5 of the Act. The Estates Commissioners in their Report gave a fair rendering of that clause. The inspectors went to work on that clause, but they had not been long at work when the Executive interfered. His first point was what right had the Executive Government to interfere in a matter like this. The Act stated that all questions of law were to be referred to a Judge, who was appointed for that purpose. Yet the Executive on their own Motion, after these instructions had been in operation for some time, absolutely reversed the instructions and told the Commissioners that the equities of the tenants were not to be taken into account, but that all that was to be considered was what was the fair value so far as the incumbrancer and remainderman were concerned. Was there ever a more monstrous interference? But half of this had not been disclosed, because the Commissioners in this Report said that there was one set of instructions issued in which the equities of the tenants were to be taken into account. But the Executive reversed that, and the question of law thus raised as to the meaning of "equitable" under Section 5 had been referred to the Judicial Commissioner under Section 23 of the Act. Did anyone ever hear the like of that? Why did they not refer it to the Judicial Commissioner at once? Why did they presume to alter what was considered to be the law, and after they had made the alterations, if they were not sure about them, why did they agree to send the matter to the Judicial Commissioner, why did the Executive step into the shoes of the Land Judge? He thought that of all methods of doing business this was the funniest he had ever heard. What did it all mean? It meant, and the sooner the House of Commons knew it the better, that they might pass whatever Act of Parliament they liked for Ireland, but the moment the Act went across to Dublin and into the hands of the law officers of the Crown and the Executive generally, that moment it was twisted and perverted in favour of a class. That was the position in which the right hon. Gentleman would find himself before he was much older. The right hon. Gentleman was bound to tell the House how, in face of the concessions the right hon. Member for Dover made in 1903, these non-judicial tenants came to be treated in this way.

Let the House understand what had been done. He took one case of the 70,000 future tenants of Ireland. The estate was being sold. The man's holding was not a judicial rent; therefore it could not come under the zones. The Estates Commissioners sent down an inspector. Under the first rule the inspector would have been entitled to report whether the price agreed upon between the tenant and landlord was a fair price or not. But under the new rule, what he was told in his instructions was to value the farm as it stood—landlords property and tenants' property—and if the two combined were security for the advance, then that was all that was wanted, and he had no right to enter into the question whether the price was a fair one or not. Did the Attorney-General dispute that advances had not been made under the old Acts because the security was not sufficient?

Mr. ATKINSON said there was not a line to that effect in any Act of Parliament. The security given was the property of the landlord and tenant combined.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL contended that what was sold under the Ashbourne Act was the landlord's interest. But what was sold now under the new directions to the Commissioners——

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member has no right to say that. It is absolutely false!

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Has the right hon. and learned Gentleman any right to say that to me? I appeal to the Chair.

MR. ATKINSON: I mean that it is unfounded; not that the hon. Member made a deliberately false statement.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said the right hon. and learned Gentleman had better say what he meant, and not bandy words like these across the floor of the House. What happened on these holdings? The inspectors simply found out whether the property of the tenant and the landlord was security for the advance, and that was taking all the equities into account. The tenant might, and very frequently would be, buying his own improvements. The old Act prevented that, because the Commissioners would not advance the money. These 70,000 future tenants were tied up: they could not get their rents fixed; if they purchased they would be at the mercy of the landlords; and the Executive by a mere act of its own stopped the inspector from reporting on the equity of the bargains, and then referred them to the Judicial Commissioner for decision as to whether they were right or wrong. That was the way Ireland was governed! These were the only people fit to govern the country! Who authorised these instructions? In reply to the Question whether the law officers of the Crown had given any advice to the Estates Commissioners on the administration of the Act, the reply was given the other day to this effect: "No; the law officers advise the Lord-Lieutenant." Of course they did, and the Lord-Lieutenant acted on their advice. Was that so?

MR. ATKINSON indicated his assent.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL asked whether it was fair or reasonable that the right hon. Gentleman should deny that he had ever advised the Estates Commissioners when what he did was to advise the Lord-Lieutenant, who acted on his advice and directed the Estates Commissioners——

MR. ATKINSON (interrupting) was understood to say that he had never given any advice. When he was asked a Question he had to reply. He could not state what advice he had given the Chief Secretary or the Lord-Lieutenant. The Estates Commissioners were not to take any law from him at all, and he had always disclaimed any attempt in that direction.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL asked whether anyone could say how the alteration had been made, and by whose authority? The Chief Secretary said it was done by order of the Executive. The Executive was Lord Dudley. Did Lord Dudley give these instructions off his own bat or on his own idea? Was that governing Ireland according to Irish ideas? No! they all knew how these things were done. The Executive acted on the advice of the law officers. Lord Dudley gave these instructions on the advice of the law officers, and they ought to state to the Committee what their grounds were for giving that advice. The Attorney-General had said that he had nothing to do with the intentions of Parliament: he had only to deal with the Act of Parliament as it stood. That was so, but the right hon. and learned Gentleman knew what the intentions of Parliament were, and if the section did not carry out those intentions it was the fault of the Attorney-General. He was not paid £5,000 a year for doing nothing. It was part of his duty to see that Bills in their passage through Parliament carried out the intentions of their promoters.

There was only one other question with which he intended to deal. He desired to call in question the action of the Crown Solicitor of the county of Tyrone and the Solicitor-General for Ireland in appearing in Court in a case in which the Judge pronounced his decision that the man was guilty of conspiring to boycott. He did not doubt that it would be said that that was a civil case, and that that fact differentiated it from a case of criminal conspiracy. That was a lawyer's subterfuge which he could not appreciate. Was not the "Tallow" case a civil action? That was one of the worst cases of boycotting which ever took place in Ireland. What would have been thought if the Crown Solicitor of Waterford and the Solicitor-General had gone down and taken briefs for the leading boycotter in the Tallow case? What had made the Tyrone case a civil case? There was no doubt about the facts.

Mr. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) asked whether, having regard to the Answer given by the Chief Secretary that there was an appeal pending in the Tyrone case, it would be in order to discuss the matter?

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: If an appeal is pending, of course there must be no discussion of the matter.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (continuing), said he did not propose in the remotest degree to touch the question itself. He was dealing with the question of the law officers of the Crown taking up such a case with a view to preventing their appearing in it should there be an appeal.

Mr. GORDON said that as he understood the case the question was whether there was a conspiracy to boycott, and the hon. Member wished to raise the point whether the Solicitor-General should appear in that case, when the question was still pending as to whether or not a man was liable for damages for criminal conspiracy.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL thought the hon. Gentleman entirely misapprehended his object. He dismissed altogether the case as far as its merits were concerned. His point was that it was unseemly for Government officials to stand up to defend a man whom the Judge had pronounced guilty of boycotting.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The matter is out of order on this Vote, as there is no mention in it of the law officers of the Crown.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said he had got out all he desired. He had managed to call attention to what he ventured to call the scandal of the law officers of the Crown standing up to defend a boycotter in the North of Ireland. With what face could the Government denounce boycotting in the West of Ireland now when their own Ministers stood in Court to defend it? Did they think that people would believe in their sincerity? Not a bit of it. They would believe as much in their sincerity in this case as they would in their new cry of Home Rule, which they were dragging as a red herring across other electoral issues. He had said enough to convince the public that a grave dereliction of duty had taken place and that the Executive should interfere to prevent its occurring again.

He would tell the Chief Secretary frankly that he was beginning a very perilous march. He could see what was going on in Ireland as well as most people. He had been long familiar with every part of that country and he knew many people on both sides of politics. He would tell the House of Commons perfectly frankly that they would not ultimately succeed in keeping the two sections of the Irish people apart. That was the basis of the whole policy of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Anything that would bring Catholics and Protestants together was anathema maranatha to them. Their two objects were to keep the Irish people at each other's throats and to get place and pension for themselves. That was their idea of politics. He regretted the new policy mainly for one reason. For four years there had been something like daylight in Ireland. They had had a gradual appeasement. He had noticed it in Ulster. There he had seen sights that had never been seen for over forty or fifty years—thousands of Catholics and Protestants marching to the same polling booth to vote for the same man. He had seen it in Orange Fermanagh, in Antrim, in East Down, and they would see it all over Ulster at the general election. That was the cause of all the trouble. The idea that Irishmen had a common country, common interests, and that it did not so much matter where men worshipped or at what shrine they knelt so that they united for the good of their common country was making its way all through the country, and the new policy was designed to thwart it and stamp it out. Members opposite knew that the moment the Irish people united, their rule must cease. They had got the Chief Secretary by the two shoulders and were endeavouring to make him stand firm as a kind of bogeyman. He hoped they would not succeed. If he was spared in health and strength he would do one man's part in preventing them succeeding. He thought it was a scandal that after four years of peace and light, the dark cloud should again drop over the face of the country, owing to the action of half-a-dozen men who did not represent Ulster and who could not get fifty men to their meetings when they held them. That was the imposture the Press was carrying out. The Unionist Press was almost as bad as the Unionist Members. It was a catastrophe for Ireland that such a thing should be allowed, but he hoped there were some Members from Ireland on the benches opposite who would see what was at the bottom of the whole business, and would refuse to bow at the bidding of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said he was sure they were all much obliged to the hon. Member for his very statesmanlike and moderate speech.

*__Mr. T. W. RUSSELL__: It was as statesmanlike as yours.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: You had better wait to hear it before you express an opinion. Continuing, he said the hon. Member had held up a picture of thousands of Catholics and Protestants marching to the polls together. He did not say whether they would do so in his own constituency of South Tyrone.

*__Mr. T. W. RUSSELL__: I think they will.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said time would show. The circumstances of the hon. Member's constituency were peculiar. There were a little over 6,000 voters there, of whom 3,000 were Nationalists and a little over 3,000 were Unionists. At the last election Mr. Russell got in by the votes of 3,200 Unionists.

*__Mr. T. W. RUSSELL__: I was opposed by both Nationalists and landlords in a three-cornered fight.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said at the next election the hon. Member hoped to get in by the half of the three thousand majority.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! These are personal matters. I ought, perhaps, to have stopped the hon. Member for South Tyrone. They have nothing to do with the Chief Secretary's Vote.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said of course he bowed to the Chair, but it was rather hard to hear oneself attacked in a most personal manner.

*__Mr. T. W. RUSSELL__: I never attacked you.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: Yes, you did, in a most personal and almost insulting manner. Continuing, he said if he was not permitted to reply he would confine himself to some remarks which the hon. Member made with respect to the Party to which he once belonged, but from which, he was glad to say, he had now parted. He wished Members on the opposite side of the House joy of their new acquisition, and he could assure the hon. Member for South Tyrone that the attacks he made upon the Irish Unionist Members, so far from doing them harm, would do them good in their constituencies. In one of his most violent attacks the hon. Member for South Tyrone pointed the finger of scorn and said, "That is the Unionist policy in Ireland." They had been trying to pin him to a definite statement that he had left the Unionist Party. For some time he found it very difficult to vacate his seat on the Unionist side of the House. They were glad he had done so, and that he had now declared himself in such a way that they would know how to deal with him when the election came. He had accused Unionists of a change of policy.

*__Mr. T. W. RUSSELL__: I said that I agreed with the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim that there had been a change of policy. I did not accuse him of it.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said the hon. Member stated that their policy had been changed because some of them who were landlords had had their pockets lined under the Land Act. He thought the hon. Member for South Tyrone was the last man in the world who ought to throw out a taunt to anybody of having changed their policy, because he had changed his own no less than six times. Probably the hon. Member began to change his policy before he (Mr. Craig) was born.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: You had better not give an opinion upon that.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said he could not allow these personal matters to be discussed.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said he had tried to avoid personal matters, but the remarks of the hon. Member for South Tyrone had been directed solely against himself. He said that the Irish Unionists as a Party were played out politically, and that was a personal remark. He ventured to predict that the political career of the hon. Member for South Tyrone would end within the next two years.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN again cautioned the hon. Member in regard to his remarks not being relevant.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said he was sorry to say that if he was stopped upon this subject he had very little more to say, because having addressed the House at very great length on the previous day he did not intend to inflict another speech on the House that day. The personal remarks, however, of the hon. Member opposite had drawn him to his feet, although by the ruling which had just been given his remarks would be considerably curtailed.

The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had proved, no doubt to his own satisfaction, that Ireland was in a perfectly peaceful condition and that there was no more necessity for the application of force than there had been during the last two years. Dealing with the county of Galway the Member for Waterford instanced two cases out of many which had been reported to show that the complaint made that the county was in a disturbed condition was bogey. He was glad to hear that the attack in one of those two cases had proved to be much less serious than was at first reported, but was the hon. and learned Member opposite prepared to say to the House that in the case of Patrick Costello there had not been very serious intimidation. This was one of the first cases in which this new form of intimidation, namely, the pulling down of walls around the farms and rendering them useless as grazing farms, had been committed. In this case over 600 yards of solid stone wall were pulled down in one night. When it was remembered that this was a grazing farm it would at once be seen that this conduct was one of the must ruthless forms of intimidation that could be indulged in. Costello then put up 600 yards of wire fencing, but three days later that was demolished, and then, to add injury to injury, Costello was summoned five times because his cattle had strayed on to neighbours' lands. It was a most horrible system of intimidation. Then there was the case of a man named Dooley. He had the lease of a farm which he wanted to buy. But the United Irish League, who up to the advent of the present Chief Secretary were the absolute lawgivers in the district, wanted this farm to split up amongst the small holders round about, and on 8th April the walls surrounding that man's farm were pulled down. Could it be contended that a county in which such things went on was in a peaceful condition? It had been stated that the policy of the Act of 1903 was that large grazing farms should be divided amongst small holders. There was no doubt that was one object of the Act, but did Members opposite uphold the methods used by the people in Galway to carry out that policy. Did the Act say that if a grazier refused to sell his farm it was legal or justifiable to put such pressure upon him as to make it impossible for him to live in the country? Every Unionist, nay, every fair-minded man in Ireland, and the Nationalist

Members also, if they believed his statement of the state of affairs existing there, must think that it was a perfectly disastrous state of things that the law should have been allowed to be set aside and that an evil policy of that sort should have gone unchecked for the time it had. He was glad to say that since the present Chief Secretary had been in office there was every appearance that that policy would be checked. An hon. Member the other day accused him and his colleagues of glorying in the coercion of his fellow-countrymen. To-day he might tell him, as he told him then, that that was absolutely false, but that if it was necessary and if the state of affairs which existed continued or grew worse, then it was the duty of the Chief Secretary to do everything he could, and if necessary to put the Crimes Act into force.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore) said the only fact he regretted in connection with the speeches of the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim and his colleague who had just sat down, was that every English, Scotch, and Welsh Member of the House was not present to listen to them. He believed that if a few thousand ordinary level-headed Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen were doomed to hear Orangemen talk for an hour once a week for twelve months the Irish question would be solved, and Home Rule secured at the end of that period. On this occasion, and on the occasion of the debate on the Address, the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim, with terrific solemnity, rose to indict a nation and to impeach the Government on the score of its suspected toleration of the majority of the nation in question. What did his speech on the Address, and even his speech that afternoon, amount to? One would have thought that after all his "sound and fury signifying nothing" he had some dark and fearful secret in the background, some real iniquity to reveal, some plot to unravel; but his grievance on the last occasion amounted to a twopenny-halfpenny complaint as to the action of a rate collector under a Nationalist county council, and to-day they had the Constable Anderson case. Constable Anderson occupied in the mind of the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim the same place that King Charles's head occupied in the mind of Mr. Dick when drafting his famous memorial. He was an absolute maniac on the subject of Catholicism and Catholics, and his judgment on any matter where the anti-Catholic question could by any possibility be brought in absolutely precluded him from presenting a reasoned argument or drawing a reasonable conclusion. He challenged the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim to say whether what he had done that afternoon—and he was possibly a future resident magistrate or County Court Judge——

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN hoped the hon. Gentleman would not transgress by making personal remarks.

Mr. DILLON said his hon. friend was perfectly in order. He was entitled to reply to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim, and his personal remarks arose out of that speech.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: What I heard was that the hon. Member was said to be looking forward to being made a resident magistrate or a County Court Judge.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE said he was about to say, when called to order, that the hon. Member for North Antrim rebuked the Nationalist Members for undermining the foundations of society in Ireland, though he himself, possibly a future administrator of justice in Ireland, came down there that afternoon and made a deliberate attempt to ruin the professional career and future of a head constable in Limerick, who had the courage to stand up in Court and say that the outrage of the incendiary fire had been the work of some malicious tramp and not the result of any agrarian agitation in the district. This was the respect for law and order which they were invited to copy. The hon. and learned Gentleman came there deliberately to make a public appeal to the Chief Secretary to black-mark a head constable in Limerick because he had the manhood and the courage to say that an incendiary fire was not a malicious or an agrarian outrage, but the action of a tramp who was revengeful on account of not getting relief.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE said the constable did not say it was an accident. He said that the man had done it himself. The Judge said he did not believe the constable, and that was his reason for mentioning the matter.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE said if the hon. Member insisted that the oath of a head constable in Ireland was not to be believed he would close with the bargain and accept the statement. The whole gist of the hon. Member's complaint was that the head constable swore in Court that the National League had nothing whatever to do with it. If that was not intimidation, he did not know what intimidation was. Another small complaint of the hon. Member was in regard to a Bible-reader who got into conflict with the local priest. The priest admitted that he lost his temper, and that he struck or hustled the Bible-reader. Speaking as a Protestant, he said that anybody who knew at all about Ireland knew perfectly well that the visits of these so-called Bible-readers were neither welcome nor wanted by more than one out of every 500 Protestant curates or rectors in the West of Ireland. [An Hon. Member: That's no reason for assault.] The question of assault was a dangerous one to raise, because the trivial assaults made on Irish Church Society Mission men, the presumptuous youths who called themselves Bible-readers and went about the South and West of Ireland, were insignificant when compared with those committed on the Salvation Army in an old cathedral town, or by mobs in places in England.

He sincerely regretted that the Chief Secretary should have allowed himself, the moment he crossed the water, to be "collared" by the Orange gang in Ireland. He repudiated the right of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Antrim to speak for the mass of the Protestants of Ireland. There were tens of thousands of Protestants in Ireland who would no more be seen in an Orange procession than in one of Dr. Dowie's tabernacles. The wretched Protestant *versus* Catholic question only flourished and provoked riot and bloodshed in those districts where Orangeism flourished. In King's County Protestants formed a strong and influential minority of the population and such a thing as the Protestant *versus* Catholic question did not exist in Tullamore. The Catholic and Protestant clergy were on the best of terms with one another, but if an Orange lodge were imported this good feeling would be at an end. They would have bogus outrages and bogus prosecutions. What were the Orangemen doing at the present moment? The hon. and learned Member for North Antrim talked about "my country," and yet he engaged in the ignoble work of defaming that country! He put it to Englishmen, Scotsmen, and Welshmen, no matter on which side of the House they sat, what would they think of a Member who went through the London weekly papers every Sunday, made an abstract of all the murders, incendiary fires, assaults on women and children, etc., and then put on the Notice Paper of the House Questions as to why the police were not taking more stringent measures to suppress these. Yet that was what the hon. Members opposite were doing assiduously; and they were aided in their work by a gang of journalistic scavengers in Ireland. What did these Unionist scavengers do in the different towns of the country? A rumour, perhaps, got afloat that a shot had been fired into a country house, and it was published with great head-lines in the *Irish Times* and the *Daily Express*. A few days afterwards it had to be confessed that it was all a mistake; that, at most, only a stone had been thrown. [Ministerial ironical laughter.] Hon. Gentleman opposite railed, but everybody knew that if a lie got twenty-four hours start, it could never be caught up,.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said the rumour was denied within twenty-four hours.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE said that he had never known a case in which hon. Members opposite, belonging to that particular group, had put a Question relating to an outrage in Ireland which was subsequently proved not to have happened—he had never heard one of them stand up and say that he was sorry he had put the Question.

As regarded the suppression of public meetings he thought it would be very interesting to have a Return of the number of public meetings which had been interfered with in England during the last fifty years. He was sure it would compare in a very startling way with the number of meetings which had been interfered with in Ireland within the last two years. He wanted to speak coolly and impartially to the Chief Secretary. The peculiar folly of proclaiming public meetings in Ireland was that it could do no good; it could only do harm. He had been at a good many proclaimed meetings, and never at one which they did not succeed in holding in the long run. He could not imagine any possible reason for proclaiming a meeting, even if it were intended to cause harm to or increase bitterness against some local man. By proclaiming the meeting it made the harm and the bitterness all the more certain. Surely the police, who were always in overwhelming force and armed to the teeth, could prevent any outrageous attack on a particular man. To drag Members of Parliament about like common felons when they went to visit their constituents, and to inflict cruel injuries on unarmed people with baton and musket-butt, did not enhance the respect for the law. They heard a great deal about respect for the law; but he did not think the law in Ireland deserved to be respected. Repect for the law rested on the general moral sense of the community. There was respect for the law in England, because there was a widespread public belief that the men who administered the law did so without fear or favour, and without any thought as to whether their decisions would be acceptable or otherwise to a section of the community. In Ireland they had no such belief. The public sentiment was very much to the contrary.

He believed that the Chief Secretary had made his initial mistake by pandering to this little pushing, noisy, bullying Orange faction which was playing the same game to-day as they had done a hundred years ago. No better illustration of that bullying game could be found than the Question put on the Notice Paper by the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim who complained of the fact that when Sir Antony MacDonnell, at the suggestion of the Congested Districts Board, visited Galway to arrange a local dispute, he was guilty of the infamy of calling on Mr. Higgins, the chairman of the local branch of the Land League, a man of considerable local importance, a magistrate, and one universally respected. The whole Orange virus was concentrated in that Question. Let the Committee observe the bullying audacity of the contention. This was what the Chief Secretary would have to guard himself against. The right hon. Gentleman would have to understand that the ascendency men were not Irishmen, any more than they were Scotsmen or Welshmen. They had arrogated to themselves the title of the garrison in Ireland; and their only grievance, at the present moment, was that they had only 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. of the rich places in the administration of the country. Their only objection to Sir Antony MacDonnell was that he was a Catholic, and was suspected of Nationalist tendencies. That was the *casus belli*. It commenced when Mr. Gill was appointed secretary to the Board of Agriculture. Then the Dublin Unionists were prepared to tear the Union Jack into tatters in order to punish Sir Horace Plunkett for appointing Mr. Gill, who, after being a member of the Irish Party, had not donned the penitential sheet and lit the penitential candle. The whole matter was that latterly Catholics and Nationalists were to a small extent having a part in the administration of Ireland. That was the frightful grievance which the Orangemen brought before Parliament. The Chief Secretary was on the wrong tack. He could not satisfy an appetite that was insatiable; and the right hon. Gentleman could no more change the ascendency man from what he was a hundred years ago than he could change wrong into right. He was still thinking of the gallant days when he lived on the fat of the land; and when the Catholic was only a hewer of wood and drawer of water. His *beau ideal* would be the revival of the penal laws. He, himself, did not impute conscious inaccuracy as regarded hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he believed their dominant feeling was that Ireland should be governed apart from the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of that country. A very superficial examination of the history of Ireland would teach the Chief Secretary that to throw himself into the arms of the Orange gang would mean ruin to any political reputation to which he might aspire.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said they could afford to take compliments of the kind paid them by the hon. Member who had just spoken when they remembered that they represented 1,250,000 of the people of Ireland; and not the least respectable and loyal of those people. They had been taunted with living in an atmosphere of unjust and unfair suspicion. Ulster Members and the Press were so spoken of by the Prime Minister. They had indeed been living more or less during these past years in an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust, but he denied it had been either unfair or unjust. Recent events had proved up to the hilt the need of that suspicion and that vigilance on the part of the Ulster Members. The representatives of Ulster had always been the most loyal supporters of the Unionist cause. It would be strange indeed if that were not so, because the Unionist cause meant to them not a mere item in a political programme, but a question absolutely vital to them and the constituencies they represented. In the feeling of mistrust and suspicion they had not been alone in the House, and they had also been backed, he was thankful and grateful to say, by a very large section of the Unionist Peers in England. He believed the Prime Minister did not make a practice of reading the newspapers. If he had read the newspapers he would have been surprised by the warning of journals, usually his hearty and enthusiastic supporters. He would take the opportunity of thanking the Press and his Unionist colleagues in the House for the support received in bringing home the reasons for this suspicion and distrust. Ulster Members might be few in numbers, but they represented the province which was the very corner-stone upon which the Unionist Party was built, and their influence had been recognised by all who realised their true position in the Unionist Party. He had spoken of suspicion and distrust, but he was very glad to be able to say—and he thought he spoke on behalf of a great many of his colleagues from Ulster—that that suspicion and distrust had been so far removed that they felt they were in a position to vote against the Amendment, and to vote with the Government for the first time for some time past on questions affecting Ireland. [A NATIONALIST: Moore did not.] He was speaking for himself and possibly for some others.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Ulster is divided.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said they would see when the division took place. He was undivided in his allegiance to the Chief Secretary for the splendid work he had done for Ireland, and in recruiting the Unionist Party since he took office. The Chief Secretary was not one of those who would indulge in idle dreams, like those entertained by the hon. Member for South Tyrone and those sitting by him, of an ideal Ireland which could never be. He was a strong man, determined to master his own Department, and to deal with facts as he found them, and he, while seeking to improve the material condition of the people of Ireland, would not allow any criminal conspiracy of any league or any Church to interfere with the carrying out of the law which it was his first duty to enforce. They believed he had the two great qualities most needed in Ireland, the most respected in Ireland in the end, the qualities of courage and sympathy. He heartily congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the beginning of his career as Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman undertook the office with great courage and self-sacrifice, and he had great pleasure on behalf of his constituents in heartily supporting him.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) expressed his regret that the Chief Secretary had surrendered so easily and so quickly to the miserable forces of bigotry and reaction. The right hon. Gentleman had already shown that he had a blind confidence in the official gang and an absolute distrust of the people. Law and order were not imperilled even in Galway. Where was the contempt for law and the disregard for property? What justification had the right hon. Gentleman for delivering such lectures? Great political capital had been made out of a few disturbances in Galway. But one of the main purposes of the Purchase Act of 1903 was to divide the vast grazing lands amongst the people. All sections of the House were united in the hope that these unfortunate people would be placed upon the rich lands to work out their salvation under circumstances of comfort and possibly prosperity. There was no more cruel and tantalising state of affairs in any civilised country of the world than that which presented itself in Galway and Roscommon, where there were these vast grazing ranches on the one hand and people anxious and willing to work on the other, and yet an unnatural, anomalous, and deplorable condition of things kept the population and the land apart. Orderly meetings were held to demand that the law should be carried into effect; representations were sent to the Estates Commissioners to deal with the matter; but all the forces of so-called law and order were ingeniously worked against the people. Where was the wrong if they called upon the men who held the land, and practised neither violence nor outrage? Did hon. Members opposite believe that the House would have consented to the passage of the Act of 1903 if it had been thought that these people would have been excluded for ever from the arable lands of the country? Even the hon. Member for South Antrim would not deny that that was a laudable and praiseworthy object, good for the people and good for the common weal. The atrocious crime of these people was that they held meetings and petitioned the Estates Commissioners, and because they did not conduct their debates with the moderation of the hon. Gentlemen on the Front benches they were to be visited with the pains and penalties of the Coercion Act. Feelings of indignation could not be coped with by the importation of thousands of policemen.

The Chief Secretary was not to be commended for the manner in which he replied to Questions of hon. Members whose only object was to defame the character of their fellow-countrymen. The history of representative institutions afforded no precedent or parallel for a body of representatives being constantly engaged in defaming the character of the people of the country from which they came. It was reserved for hon. Members opposite to devote their energies to fouling their own nest. Attention had recently been called to the total of 205 agrarian outrages during the year, and the Chief Secretary, to keep hon. Members opposite in a good temper, gave the congenial Answer that the immunity from punishment was due to the fact that the people who were victimised were afraid to come forward. But 124 out of the 205 cases were only cases of intimidation, and of these the bulk were threatening letters and notices. Did anybody believe that the majority of those letters were not written or caused to be written by the people themselves? How could anything of that kind be proved to be a threatening letter. He had always believed, and he still believed, that it was quite within the power of an unscrupulous policeman, panting for promotion, to keep his finger on the valve of crime and outrage, make the register rise or fall, and to increase or decrease the number of threatening notices and letters and even the atrocious crime of cattle mutilation and outrage. Had the House forgotten the Sergeant Sheridan, the Constable Sullivan, and the Mulrooney cases? Were not Sergeant Sheridan's colleagues capable of doing the same thing to-day? Surely they were not going to accept these figures of 205 simply upon constabulary authority. The Chief Secretary accepted this statement without examination and analysis, and then proceeded to lecture the Irish people as a whole and the Irish Members without discretion or discrimination.

They had observed with what levity the right hon. Gentleman had treated the sacred right of public meeting and free speech. An hon. friend of his attended a public meeting in Ireland at which he was subjected to personal violence by the police and where he saw one of his colleagues attacked by the police. And what did the Chief Secretary bring forward in reply to a Question upon this subject? Simply the bare statement of those who were on their defence in this matter. But for the ruling of the Chair his hon. friend would have been denounced as guilty of falsehood, although he was speaking of what he saw, because he was looking on and saw the occurrence himself. The Chief Secretary, without investigation, was always ready to accept the statements of constables, and he waived aside the testimony of his hon. friend. That was not treating Members of the House of Commons with proper courtesy. He disputed the doctrine of the Chief Secretary that the police had a legal right on their own mere *ipse dixit* to prohibit a public meeting in Ireland. They knew how all this was worked. The right. hon. Gentleman said that the police had the power to stop a lawfully convened public meeting on their own responsibility. The Russian police at the present time claimed no more than that. When they saw the right hon. Gentleman addressing a meeting of his political friends in Dublin accompanied by all the forces of bigotry and ascendency in Ireland, and laying down all the old doctrines, the Irish people were apt to take such action as the prelude and forerunner of a course of coercion, and naturally their suspicions were aroused. He warned the right hon. Gentleman against taking a course of that kind. All they could do in the matter now was to remonstate. The right hon. Gentleman might consider it to be his duty to do what other Chief Secretaries had done, but his effotrs would end in failure in the same way as the same policy adopted by his predecessors had failed.

*MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) twitted the Nationalists with having during the past three hours devoted themselves to personal recrimination instead of the discussion of Irish administration. The hon. Member for King's County had said that he spoke as a Protestant. He deprecated references to the religious beliefs of hon. Members, although he quite believed that if he were to cross the floor and declare that he was a converted Orangeman the Nationalist Members would not only accept him but even find a constituency for him in order to point out the great salvation there was within their fold. He protested against the unscrupulous attempts which were made to misrepresent the position of Ulster Members, and complained that the Nationalists in their criticisms did not give other people credit for the honesty they claimed for themselves. The hon. Member for King's County had referred to the treatment which the Salvation Army received from English mobs in a cathedral town. He could not help recalling that when in Dublin on one occasion he saw a little bit of Irish administration in regard to the Salvation Army. Walking along the street one evening he heard a great noise, and on going to the scene he found 300 or 400 people not disguising the fact that they were Nationalists. They were gathered around two or three Salvation Army lasses, and were cursing and swearing at them while there was breath in their bodies. On that occasion they were tolerated by the police, and in the interests of law and order it was found necessary to pat them on the shoulder and say, "Now boys, keep quiet." His idea of Irish administration would have been to lock them up, but he knew that would be repulsive to people whose tolerance in the case of Dr. Long of Limerick took the form of refusing a conveyance to drive him to a patient. Yet they found hon. Members representing Nationalist constituencies getting up, without blush or shame, and making certain charges against Members from the North of Ireland. These personal attacks were a waste of the time of the House.

His hon. and learned friend the Member for North Antrim had referred to the notorious case of Constable Anderson. He, himself, had been waiting with anxiety to hear a demand from the hon. Member for East Mayo for the public inquiry in regard to which he had put a Question on the Paper the other day. He did not object to the effort on the part of the hon. Member to enable the Rev. Mr. O'Hara to clear his position, but that should not be made at the expense of the character that had already been indicated, and it should not be made in order to bring further base insinuations against a man who had been tried once and acquitted, tried again and found guilty, and tried a third time, by the head of the Irish Administration and reinstated with full pay for the time he had been off. That man had had the misfortune, in the estimation of some, to pay attention to a girl who happened to be a Roman Catholic. He had been refreshing his memory regarding what passed in the House when the subject was debated, and he found that the late Chief Secretary did not attempt to justify Father O'Hara's action with regard to the whole of this transaction. He and his friends had no objection to an inquiry for they had nothing to fear. But he would ask hon. Members opposite whether it was their intention or desire that this woman, who had become the wife of Constable Anderson, should go through this unpleasant ordeal again. Her character had been vindicated beyond dispute, and was she to be held up to the public gaze for the gratification of one man. He regretted that the case had been brought up again, and he thought hon. Gentlemen opposite should have some consideration for the feelings of people who had been in a position less fortunate than themselves.

And, it being half past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means from the remainder of this day's Sittings.

Whereupon Mr. Jeffreys, the Deputy-Chairman, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY (8th Allotted Day).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £13,950, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary in Dublin and London, and of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums."

Mr. Sloan.

*Mr. SLOAN (continuing his speech) said he did not see why Nationalists should take exception to the Chief Secretary accepting an invitation to a banquet under the auspices of a Unionist organisation, seeing that Sir Antony MacDonnell had accepted an address from his political friends at Castlebar. The Member for North Antrim referred to a case in Belfast, and lest the House should be misled he would like to supplement what had been said. That man did not take exception to a Roman Catholic clergyman as such. He was somewhat eccentric and denounced the clergy of all denominations: he was fined 40s. for what he did. And in contrast to that he pointed out that at Westport a priest who had kicked a man because he disagreed with what he was doing was dismissed by a majority of the bench, and was presented with a purse of sovereigns and an address by the people of the district as marks of their approval of his action. What an uproar there would have been from the Nationalist Benches if that individual had been a Protestant clergyman. He then referred to the matter of the auxiliary asylum at Youghal, where 350 simples were confined in an unused industrial school without any resident medical superintendent, and he wished to know whether it was the intention of the Irish Government to give the capitation grant. A few days ago an inquest was held with reference to the death of one of the inmates, and the jury distinctly stated that these individuals ought not to be kept in that place, but ought to be in hospital. The Inspector of Lunatics had protested against the arrangement and Sir Antony MacDonnell had done likewise. He asked the Chief Secretary how long was this state of things to be permitted to continue. He protested against the allegations of the Nationalists that the hon. Members for Ulster brought forward nothing but bogus grievances.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: You have a grievance against the Carlton Club.

*MR. SLOAN said it did not matter to him whether it was against the Carlton Club or anybody else: he would give voice to any grievance he might have. He did not take any mere partisan view of his responsibility as a Member of Parliament. He was born in Belfast and he was not ashamed of being an Irishman, and any measure which promised to better the condition of the people of Ireland—whether Protestants or Roman Catholics—would have his support and he should not be ashamed to give an account of his stewardship to the people who sent him to the House of Commons. He could not think the Nationalists seriously meant to assert that there was a Party in the North of Ireland who desired to crush everybody in order to get an ascendency. He hated ascendency, and he believed the people should be free and unfettered. He believed the present Chief Secretary was doing his best, and although he regretted that coercion should have to be resorted to he was not in a position to dictate to the Administration when special measures should or should not be applied. The real justification for any measures of that kind was the conduct of the people. He was sure that in regard to the effort being made to better the country, honesty would be observed by those representing Ulster constituencies as well as by those in the South and West.

MR. T. M. HEALY urged that the House ought to have something like a statement of the policy of the new Chief Secretary on the initiation of his reign in Ireland. The silence which the right hon. Gentleman had maintained for so long was the more remarkable because he had been accused, or complimented, as the case might be, of being the representative, if not the author, of a new policy in Ireland. The Nationalists in that House were entitled to know what that new policy was. It could not be a new policy for one part of the country, because the Ulster people had declared that they were content with the British Government. It must be, therefore, a new policy with regard to the discontented portion of the country; and they were entitled in that House to a first statement as regarded that policy, such as was given by the Secretary of State for War or the representative of the Admiralty. For some reason or another it had seemed good to the Conservatives of Ireland to discount the official statement by holding a dinner in Dublin in order to decant the right hon. Gentleman's opinions there. Certainly the result of that decantation, if he might use the word, had been the most extraordinary statement he had ever known an official to make. It was all very well for a gentleman to proclaim his unworthiness and unfitness for a position. When he cried *nolo episcopari* one generally expected him to lay down the crozier and the mitre. If an Irish Member were inducted into the office of Home Secretary for England, it would be an extraordinary thing for him at a banquet at the Holborn Restaurant to say that he was utterly unfit for the office, that he would not know England on the map, that he did not know one county in England, that he did not know Holborn from the Strand, that he was in ignorance of the situation here, and that his only claim to the position was that he had assumed it at the call of duty to his chief. Let any one fancy a man taking charge of a man-of-war, having been a bricklayer or a carpenter; or taking command of an army, having been a shoemaker or clerk, and boasting of it, and claiming consideration from his opponents on the ground that he was absolutely unfitted for the position. It made one ashamed of being an Irishman to think that an English Minister could boast that his chief claim to the consideration of that country was that he knew absolutely nothing about it.

The right hon. Gentleman denied that Ireland had been neglected by the Parliament of England, because, he said, forty-one statutes had been passed by the Tory Party in this country for Ireland in the last ten or twelve years. How many statutes had been passed for England and Scotland in that time? They were passed every year by the hundred. The right hon. Gentleman considered that the Government were entitled to boast because they had passed as many statutes for Ireland in ten years as the humblest Irish Assembly which could be constituted in that country could pass in a single session. The right hon. Gentleman watered the wild Unionism in Dublin with an announcement that did not seem to have been entirely palatable to the noble army of Dukes and others gathered at the festivities. He stated that there were still wanting various reforms and amendments in the law which it was the duty of the united Parliament to make. Why had they not his statement as to what they were? The present Government had not long to run. Was the right hon. Gentleman content to remain in office for whatever lees and dregs might remain and to do nothing but ordinary acts of administration? That would be an ignoble position for a statesman to assume. However interesting these small matters that had been raised on the other side of the House might be, it was almost degrading to hear them being discussed, when Irishmen were concerned in so much larger questions. Both sides lost by allowing themselves to be enmeshed in these smaller questions, because Ulstermen needed measures of progress for themselves as much as people in other parts of Ireland did. England had the benefit of Irish troops and Irish seamen; and again he asked where was the value for the money which the Irish people paid?

He maintained that Ireland should insist, every year when the Chief Secretary's salary came up, on a statement from him, just as the House insisted on a statement with regard to the great Indian dependency, or colonies like the Leeward or Windward Islands. Let the right hon. Gentleman give them some information about their country and as to what the British Government was doing with it. When it was squandering their revenues and appointing their officials, what had it got to say for itself, with a mass of seething discontent in the North and the South and the West? The right hon. Gentleman was entitled to claim that he had a representative gathering in Dublin the other night, but what were the facts? The Orange Party in Dublin took a division against giving him a dinner at all. While the right hon. Gentleman had the support of the great landlords like the Duke of Abercorn and all the worthy gentleman who were well off no matter what Government was in power, there was a democratic Party which drove him from Liverpool at the last general election and compelled him to get a seat lower down in the country. He was obliged by this very Orange section to quit his own constituency on the religious difficulty. He, himself, took no interest in that question; but what happened? When the question of the invitation to the right hon. Gentleman came up before this great council of Orangemen not more than thirty of the entire body were present and fourteen of them voted against giving him any reception whatsoever. The Unionist Members did not speak of these things in the House before the Nationalists. They did not want to let the Philistines rejoice, but meet an Orangeman or a Protestant anywhere in Ireland, unless he had a salary, and he was as bitter and indignant against the methods of British Government in Ireland as the Nationalists. Therefore he said they were entitled to ask what the British Government were doing with their ten millions of money. He believed that the notion of this river of gold which was for ever flowing from their poor little impoverished country to enrich this great and wealthy land would even yet appeal to Irishmen of all classes. In London they saw millions expended on new buildings for the Navy, for the Army, and other Departments, but when a small expenditure was asked for Dublin Castle the money could not be got. The time would come when Irishmen on both sides in the House of Commons would have to have a sort of Public Accounts Committee, which should trace Irish revenue from its source in Ireland to its place of expenditure here and see what they got in return. They got nothing but broken-down Chief Secretaries.

Those of them who were engaged in the real business of politics, and not in recrimination or idle chatter, were sent there to promote a far higher cause than that raised by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had now been inducted into his office and he would therefore ask him, had he a policy; what was it; where was it invented; did it differ from the policy of the right hon. Member for Dover; and how was it originated? Did he sit in the Cabinet for four years with the right hon. Member for Dover and approve of his acts? The right hon. Member passed the Land Act and made various speeches on the University question. Did the Chief Secretary approve of those statements, and if he differed from him had his so-called new policy the sanction of the Cabinet? Did he differ from his Lord-Lieutenant, and, if so, were the Irish people to look to the Lord-Lieutenant for a statement of policy, or to one who was, nominally at least, his subordinate officer? They were induced two years ago to support the Purchase Act and especially the bonus of £12,000,000 to the landlords upon the suggestion that they were entering upon something like a new era of conciliation. If the right hon. Gentleman had a different policy from that of the Member for Dover, the Irish landlords had been getting the money under false pretences. What business had the landlords of Ireland to press round the right hon. Gentleman and insinuate new policies in his ear which they did not declare when the Bill of 1903 was going through the House of Commons? Great fault was found now with the unfortunate Connaught peasants because it was said that they were greedy of land and wanted to drive the graziers off their farms; but who first gave official encouragement to these poor cotters? The most Socialistic and revolutionary proposals on this subject were to be found in the statutes that the Imperial Parliament had passed; but because these sections of compulsory purchase were directed, not against the landlords, but against the tenants, Socialism and Communism received legislative sanction. The third Section of the Act of 1903 enabled the Congested Districts Board to resume, which meant annex, a holding in order to distribute it amongst the surrounding tenants. But if the Board might seize his little farm, which he held under a judicial tenancy, why were not the branches of the National League, containing gentlemen just as respectable and honourable as the members of the Board, to pass resolutions on the subject? He would again ask the right hon. Gentleman what his new policy was.

MR. GORDON said he wished to reprobate the doctrine contained in the concluding part of the hon. and learned Member's speech. This was not a question which ought to be determined in a debate of this kind. The violence of language used by hon. Gentlemen opposite towards Unionists ought to be an object-lesson as to what they would have to suffer if they had a Parliament in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman argued that because the Legislature had provided a means under the law of dividing up the grass lands of Connaught, and because that was not being carried out as rapidly as the people wished, they were entitled to intimidate the owners of property. That was against not only every principle of law, but of every principle of morality; and he was surprised that a Member of the legal faculty should stand up for such a doctrine. Why should the hon. and learned Member justify outrages and crimes which ought to be suppressed? The hon. and learned Member for Waterford brushed aside the Return of outrages and said, "Oh, that is nothing." In Munster and Connaught there were all these serious agrarian crimes which brought terror and misery to innocent householders. Were firing into houses and maiming cattle of no account? Was the right hon. Gentleman who was responsible for the preservation of law and order in Ireland to be condemned because he said in public and in the presence of the Press that he intended so far as he could to preserve law and order in Ireland? The suggestion was always made that these outrages were provoked by the police, because one black sheep had been found in the police. It was an unworthy suggestion. There were eleven cases of killing and maiming cattle in the two provinces of Munster and Connaught Were these outrages not to be put down? Did hon. Gentlemen opposite defend these crimes?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): We have always condemned them and we always shall.

Mr. GORDON said that he did not think that hon. Members opposite had condemned them. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had spoken of the number of threatening letters which he had received. He should like to see these letters, and compare them with the threatening letters sent to innocent householders threatening to injure their property and to make family life unbearable. Was the Chief Secretary to be denounced because he said that he would try as well as he could to see that law and order were maintained and that such crimes were put an end to? It was the first duty of every Government to give security to life and property, and to see that the law was obeyed. They were told that everything the Unionist Members for Ireland said must be wrong. But they represented a certain section of the community, just as much as hon. Gentlemen opposite represented their section. The Unionist Members represented the section of the community which had two-thirds of the industries of Ireland, and paid more than half of the revenue collected from the whole population of Ireland. He thought, therefore, that when the House heard statements made by the Nationalist Members of Ireland in reference to the small body that represented the Unionist Party in Ireland it ought to bear in mind that that body, however small, represented practically one-third of the population of Ireland, far more than one-half of the manufacturing industries of the country, and a great deal more than one-half of the actual revenue that was paid by Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer. Therefore, though their numbers were small they had the right to have their opinions and views put before the House just the same as the Members for the South and West of Ireland. Law and order ought to be equally administered in every part of the country and to every man in the country irrespective of class or position. Let every man be treated on fair and equal terms. Let the Chief Secretary administer the law in that spirit and he would earn the praise, not the blame, of all right-minded men.

He was surprised that the hon. Member for South Tyrone could not avoid attacking the meeting at which the Chief Secretary was welcomed to Ireland. Was it suggested that the Unionists of Ireland were not justified in extending their hospitality to the Chief Secretary? If the Radicals were in power and sent over a Chief Secretary he would probably be entertained by the Radicals in Ireland, but it would not be a very big entertainment.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Did you ever entertain the late Chief Secretary?

Mr. GORDON: The hon. Member for South Tyrone had described the gentlemen at the meeting as "old pals" of his. He rounded on his old pals occasionally, and whoever were the hon. Member for South Tyrone's pals now they would find that he would round on them some day. But there were about 200 at that dinner, and they represented the trade, commerce, and industry of Ireland, with a few Peers who were Irishmen living in Ireland. Was it a great charge against the right hon. Gentleman that he went to such an entertainment as that and that he made a speech which was reported in every newspaper in Ireland, and of which the only parts that could be attacked in the House of Commons were those in which he declared his determination to preserve law and order. If there had been anything in his speeches at Belfast and Dublin that could have been laid hold of by the Nationalists they would have set it out in detail in the House of Commons. They had had from the Nationalists a hollow pretence of an attack. It must be made on every Chief Secretary, whether they agreed with him or not. It had been made in the same terms, in the same form, and chiefly by the same speakers often before, and they might expect it to be made so long as a Unionist Government was at the head of affairs. And even when the Opposition came into office they would not escape, because it would be impossible for any man who tried to preserve law and order in Ireland to avoid those attacks.

They had been called the Ascendancy Party. He thought there was very little of the quality of the Ascendancy Party amongst them. They were ordinary, plain, hard-working men who had to make their living in Ireland, and who were capable of forming an opinion as to what they believed would be to the best interests of Ireland. It was not a question of landlords. The Nationalists were always talking about landlords. Whatever the Nationalists said about them, the men who represented the Unionists of Ireland were trying to voice the views of their constituents, and trying as far as they could to get even-handed justice in Ireland, and to see that law and order were preserved there.

MR. DILLON said the hon. Member opposite had been giving the Nationalist Party a lecture, and his speech was full of recrimination from beginning to end. He wished to call attention to a new departure, not in policy, but in the procedure, made by the Chief Secretary from the custom which had ruled Ireland in recent years. The present Chief Secretary had imprudently broken a custom according to which the responsible Minister for Ireland avoided Party meetings in that country. It was even more necessary to avoid Party meetings when the Chief Secretary happened to represent a Government which was in sympathy with the minority in Ireland. The post of Chief Secretary for Ireland was not analagous to the position of any other British Minister because there was only one Minister who governed Ireland. Sometimes it was the Lord-Lieutenant and sometimes the Chief Secretary, and he was absolute in all departments of the State in Ireland. It should be remembered that when a coercion Government was in power the British Minister for Ireland governed that country against the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the Irish people. That was unfortunate, but it nevertheless threw upon the Chief Secretary an additional burden of responsibility not to identify himself with any Party in Ireland by attending Party meetings. What would be said by the hon. Members of the small Unionist Party opposite if, when a Radical came into power, the Irish Secretary were to inaugurate his tenure of office by attending a mass meeting in the Rotunda under the auspices of the United Irish League. That was just as lawful a body as the Dublin and Belfast Unionist Associations and it represented the majority of the Irish people; consequently it would be, constitutionally, a much more decent proceeding than what the Chief Secretary did in Belfast. Such a proceeding would have been received with howls [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] Yes, it would have been received with howls, and the first man to howl would be the Solicitor-General for Ireland. It was an imprudent thing for the Irish Secretary to have identified himself in such a prominent way with the Irish Unionist Party. This was the more unfortunate when he went over to reverse the policy of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. His policy was to govern Ireland against Irish ideas. In the speech he recently made he studiously avoided mentioning Lord Dudley's name, and put up Lord Dunraven as a kind of Aunt Sally to aim his blows at; but the whole of that speech was directed against the Lord-Lieutenant, and poured ridicule and contempt on an address he had delivered by and with the authority of the Cabinet. They did not need to ask the right hon. Gentleman for his policy, because they had got it. His policy was to govern Ireland in accordance with the wishes of the loyalist section of the Irish people. The Chief Secretary's masters were the three gentlemen sitting beside him—the English Solicitor-General and the Irish law officers. He would be allowed to remain in office so long as he obeyed them, and not an hour longer.

If it were possible he would much prefer that they should confine this debate to the broad general questions affecting the general policy of Ireland, but under the present circumstances it was idle to do that, because by doing it they would be simply beating the air and keeping aloof from the actual position of things in Ireland. They had to utilise such opportunities as were offered to them [to expose and criticise the conduct of the Executive Government in Ireland. Three topics on which he desired to address the Committee were the Anderson case, the disastrous interference of the Executive in the administration of the Land Act, and the deliberate conspiracy, encouraged by the Chief Secretary, to manufacture bogus outrages in order to justify coercion. The Anderson case was an important issue, because it illustrated the methods by which the Orange Party carried on their campaign against justice and common honesty in Ireland, endeavouring when brought to book in the House to burke discussion and to run away. They had endeavoured again and again to get a full statement of the facts in regard to this case, because the Ulster Party had used it in the most unscrupulous and cruel way to hound down a man whose mouth was closed, but when they were brought to book upon it they had run away on every occasion, and they had done all they could to burke discussion and suppress the facts.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said the only chance they got was last session, and they took it.

MR. DILLON said that on the 8th of July last the subject was introduced, and, when the Anderson case was raised, the Whip of the Unionist Party rose and brought up another subject in spite of the repeated protests of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE said the hon. Member was referring to an attempt made to confine the Anderson case to a discussion between the hours of nine and twelve. The hon. Member apparently did not know the facts.

MR. DILLON said that what he had stated was absolutely correct.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: No, it is not correct.

MR. DILLON said that later on the case was again brought forward by the leader of the Ulster Party, the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, and a long discussion took place. The hon. and gallant Member moved a reduction of the Chief Secretary's salary, and then it was talked out by a Member of the Party opposite.

Mr. Dillon.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: The charge that we had it talked out is absolutely unfounded. An hon. Member got up and talked it out, and he was censured by our Party for doing so.

MR. DILLON said it was absolutely true that they censured the hon. Member for Belfast, but he had had his say, and he had since explained that it was arranged that an English Member should talk it out.

AN HON. MEMBER: Did the hon. Member impute that they made any such arrangement with an English Member. If he did it was absolutely untrue.

MR. DILLON said the hon. Member for Belfast said at a public meeting that he regretted the censure passed upon him because it was necessary to keep up appearances, but he said everybody knew that arrangements had been made that an English Member should talk it out, and that it was not to be allowed to go to a division. He further stated that the reason he rose to talk it out was that the English Member who should have talked it out was not sufficiently alert in getting up to speak. In the course of that discussion he urged that a full inquiry into the case should be held, and that all the documents should be produced, and what did hon. Members opposite do? Not one of them backed up that demand. The hon. Member for North Antrim had written a letter to him saying that he was strongly opposed to any further inquiry into this case.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Will the hon. Member read my letter?

MR. DILLON: No.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I said that, as regards the Constable Anderson case, I thought three inquiries and a debate in this House were quite sufficient without inflicting another upon us. I said that if the Under-Secretary believed what the hon. Member had stated, that he had not been adequately defended, it was open to him to resign and defend himself.

Mr. DILLON said there was a most remarkable anxiety amongst hon. Members opposite that the facts of this case should not be made public. ["Oh, oh!"] A more cruel, baseless, and abominable calumny was never uttered against a public servant or a clergyman than that brought against Sir Antony MacDonnell and the priest concerned in connection with the Constable Anderson case. The whole thing was a lying invention, and, although hon. Members from Ulster continued to describe it as "the Anderson crime and abomination," the true facts were still withheld, and hon. Gentlemen opposite made no effort to have them elicited. He wished to remind the Chief Secretary of what occurred in the House of Lords. On July 12th Lord Cadogan made an application in the House of Lords that all the Papers in connection with the Anderson case should be laid on the Table. If that had not been a proper thing to do Lord Cadogan would not have done it. Lord Ashbourne said he would inquire into the matter and see whether Papers could be laid. Lord Spencer, another ex-Lord-Lieutenant, also urged that Papers should be produced, and when asked what Papers, replied—

> "I can only speak from experience in these matters. There was a time when matters of this sort entirely came before me when I was Lord-Lieutenant, and in my idea there must be minutes relating to the Court of inquiry and minutes which would show how the primary and final decisions were arrived at."

Those were the minutes which should be produced. Not a single reason had been given for their non-production, and yet for months a great servant of the Crown had been allowed to be most shamefully assailed, and down to that hour Sir Antony MacDonnell had not been honestly defended in the House. If he was to blame in this matter he was not fit to hold his position, but he ought to have ordinary justice. The commonest criminal would not be allowed to be so treated. If Sir Antony MacDonnell had sinned let him suffer, but if he had not sinned, let his reputation be completely cleared.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: Does he say, or do you, that he has not been properly defended?

Mr. DILLON: I say so on my own responsibility. That is a cowardly observation to make.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That is not an expression that should be used.

Mr. DILLON: It was used to me two or three times recently, but you did not call my assailant to order.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the expression used, or I should have called for its withdrawal.

Mr. DILLON regretted the Deputy-Chairman had not taken the same view the other day. In any case, he did not call the hon. Member a coward; he said the observation was cowardly. Although he withdrew the expression, he thought it was perfectly in order. All he would say was that it was improper and mean for the hon. Member to get up and ask whether Sir Antony MacDonnell said he was not properly defended. Did not the hon. Member know enough of public life to be aware that Sir Antony MacDonnell's lips were sealed in this matter, and he was absolutely defenceless. That in itself was a reason why his superiors should treat him with greater generosity and loyalty. Even the Solicitor-General had hounded on the Orange gang against him, and denounced his own colleague and a subordinate of his own Government in a way never ——

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir Edward Carson, Dublin University) said he had never denounced his own colleague. What he said was that his colleague had disavowed a certain scheme, and that if a subordinate was connected with a scheme which his superior had disavowed he was guilty of misconduct towards the Government.

Mr. DILLON said the right hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware that from the surrounding circumstances of that speech he had laid himself open to the imputation of having used private information obtained as a member of the Government.

Sir EDWARD CARSON said he had no private information. It was alleged that an official at the Castle was connected with the bringing forward of this devolution scheme, and all he said was that, if so, it was misconduct.

Mr. DILLON: Before you made that statement did you ask Lord Dudley or the Irish Secretary as to what the circumstances were?

Sir EDWARD CARSON: Certainly not.

Mr. DILLON said he would pass from the Anderson case, as he thought he had said enough to convince any fair-minded man that Sir Antony MacDonnell had been treated in a very scurvy manner. The importance of the case lay in the fact that it was an illustration of the means and methods by which Government was carried on in Ireland.

The next point he desired to raise was the interference by the Executive Government with the operations of the Estates Commissioners. In this connection he would make a direct charge of gross breach of faith against the Government. The Report of the Estates Commissioners stated—

> "All proceedings under this section have since been regulated by the Act of Parliament, provisional rules, and the instructions received from time to time from His Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant."

A most distinct pledge was given during the discussions on the Bill that all regulations issued by the Lord-Lieutenant should be communicated to the House.

Mr. ATKINSON: Future regulations.

Mr. DILLON said he was referring to the discussions during the passage of the Bill. It was generally understood that that expression included all communications from the Executive Government having a binding or directing effect on the operations of the Commissioners. But what had been done? It was evident from the Report issued by the Commissioners that they had been controlled, and in some instances controlled against their opinion, by instructions issued by the Executive Government, and though the Act had been in operation for a year and a-half the country was still in ignorance of the nature of these instructions. The Government had taken refuge in the extraordinary plea that these instructions were not regulations under Sub-section 8, but confidential communications from one department to another. That was a subterfuge which would enable them completely to evade their pledge and to give the public no information whatever about these instructions. It was the grossest breach of faith he had ever known in the House of Commons.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have stated quite distinctly what is my position in the matter. I can only deal with the future. I have stated quite explicitly that I am responsible for the regulations, which will be issued. The regulations which are now in draft and will be issued as soon as I am able to lay them on the Table, are all the regulations which will be issued to the Estates Commissioners, and I have stated that if it should be necessary to add to or alter them, so far as I am responsible, those alterations or additions shall also be placed upon the Table.

Mr. DILLON said that if that were so, why should there be all this concealment with regard to the instructions already given and in operation. Where was the difference? If the sub-section was admitted to apply to all regulations given in the future, had it not the same efficacy with regard to instructions given in the past? Why should there be all this mystery? The House was driven to the conclusion that there was something in those instructions of which the Government was ashamed and which they did not dare publish to the world. [Mr. Walter Long: No.] Then why not publish them and so end the whole controversy? Never had so absurd a position been taken up by a Government. The Commissioners stated that, under the instructions to inspectors, provisional agreements between landlords and tenants were indicated as one of the means by which the price which the tenants would be willing to pay could be ascertained, but that subsequently they were regarded as conclusive evidence of the tenants' willingness to buy at the price. Why were they taken as conclusive evidence? Thousands of such agreements were signed under duress of threats to proceed for arrears of rent, and they were signed by tenants in the confident belief that when inquired into by the inspector they would be broken. The original instructions laid it down that such agreements were to be considered only as one element in determining what the tenants were willing to pay, but now under some compelling force they were to be taken as final evidence, and the inspectors were not allowed to inquire whether there had been duress exercised or not.

Then there was the question of the reinstatement of evicted tenants, the provisions in regard to which had been a dismal failure. The Commissioners stated—

"Considerable correspondence passed with the Treasury which resulted in the issue of directions."

Who authorised the issue of those directions?

MR. ATKINSON: I know no more about them than the hon. Member himself. I never heard of any such instructions.

MR. DILLON said the mystery deepened. Where in the name of Heaven did they come from? Who had authority to issue them? Did the right hon. and learned Gentleman suggest that the Commissioners made a false statement in their Report?

MR. ATKINSON: I have had matters attributed to me of which I know nothing whatever, and with which I am in no way concerned. I never saw the instructions or gave any opinion upon them. I know nothing whatever about them.

MR. DILLON: said the Committee had been informed that the Attorney-General always gave his legal advice to the Castle when asked to do so, and he assumed——

MR. ATKINSON: You have no right to assume it, because it is not true. I said I gave advice when I was asked for it, but that does not justify the hon. Member in assuming that I was asked for and gave advice in this matter.

MR. DILLON asked whether it would not be better to publish the whole of the instructions and thus clear up the entire business. There was evidently some ugly mystery, and the Attorney-General appeared to be particularly anxious to wash his hands of all responsibility. The instructions must have come from somebody. The Treasury had no right to issue directions. Whence did they come? Directions had been issued which had paralysed the operations of the Land Act in one of its most important departments; nobody was responsible, and nobody knew whence they came, but they had done their work, with the result that the promises held out by the Member for Dover had been completely nullified. No wonder the people were exasperated and disappointed.

Another respect in which the action of the Act had been paralysed was with regard to congestion. When the Act was introduced they were told that its primary object was to rescue the unhappy population of the West of Ireland from their hideous condition; now by some malign influence that portion of the Act had also been rendered a nullity, and while the Duke of Leinster added £4,000 or £5,000 a year to his income, and other relations of Ministers also got their twenty-five years purchase at the expense of the English taxpayer, these unhappy peasants of the West were left in the misery from which this Act was specially passed to rescue them.

It was a disgrace and a scandal, and the Committee ought to use every means in its power to draw aside the curtain which cloaked the operations which had destroyed the efficacy of the Act as a remedial and assuaging measure.

Then there were the alleged outrages in the West of Ireland, and the conspiracy for the manufacture of bogus outrages, a shameful conspiracy got up by Lord Ashtown and others, and shamelessly carried on in the House by a handful of Irishmen who ought to be ashamed of their conduct in seeking to blacken their country in the eyes of the world. Being an opponent of dynamite, he was shocked when the London Press, including *The Times*, were rather inclined to justify the gentlemen who threw bombs in St. Petersburg and Warsaw. He was not there to advocate the rule of Russia, but under that rule, whatever might be said of it, Warsaw had doubled in population and quadrupled in wealth, and both Finland and Poland had increased in wealth and population, while under English rule Ireland had dwindled away in both those respects. Who, then, would condemn the peasants of Galway if they went out with bands of music and pulled down stone walls?

He would refer for a moment to a remarkable Return issued by the Chief Secretary yesterday showing the number and nature of the outrages and other offences of an indictable character reported by the police in each county of Ireland from December 1st, 1904, to April 19th, 1905. There were eight cases of murder in the whole of Ireland, of which two were in Ulster; four of homicide and manslaughter, of which three were in Ulster; six of firing at the person, of which three were in Ulster. With regard to the offence of procuring or attempting to procure abortion, this heading was absolutely blank for the whole of Ireland. Could they show such a record in this respect in England? This was the country which they were going to place under a Crimes Act because a stone wall had been pulled down. The same Return showed that there had been 115 cases of burglary and house-breaking in Ireland, sixty-one of which were in Ulster; seventy-four cases of robbery, and thirty-four of them in Ulster; coining and uttering base coin, seven cases, and four of them in Ulster. In regard to disgraceful crimes, Ulster stood, he would not say at the top of the list, but in a worse position than the whole of the other three provinces combined. And it was the representatives of this province who had the audacity and insolence to come down to the House and, night after night, ask questions about the throwing down of a stone wall in Galway. If this kind of thing continued they would search the English papers, and in the case of every atrocity that was committed they would ask the British Government what they were going to do, and they would make this House ashamed of England. They would not allow the House of Commons to be used as a place for advertising bogus outrages in Ireland.

The Chief Secretary, by the Answers he had given in that House, had encouraged this proceeding. Did anyone imagine that every member of the Irish Constabulary did not take his hint from the Chief Secretary, who was a more absolute ruler in Ireland than was the Tsar in Russia, who ruled Ireland with as great and unchecked a power as the Sultan ruled Turkey, and, when he saw that outrages were wanted, produced them? Those men had for years gone round Ireland receiving rewards and promotion for their zeal, and it was very remarkable that wherever they were sent outrages cropped up, and it turned out that they had been committed by the police themselves, and innocent people were arrested for those crimes. Some of the cases had been found out, but how many were there which had never been found out? It was his deliberate conviction that this kind of thing was still going on in Ireland. What had happened in the House that night? When the Orange crowd opposite had been brought to book, what was the catalogue of crimes they had to produce? Simply a wall which had been knocked down in Galway, and that was their whole case. Was that an awful record against a population goaded to madness by the broken pledges of the Government, who had promised that the grass lands would be bought up and divided amongst them. He was astonished at the patience of the peasantry. For his part, he said that, unless the Government made up their minds to amend the Land Act where it required amendment and to withdraw the evil influences which were now mysteriously exercised, it was impossible that human nature could be patient against the treatment to which the Irish people had been subjected. Agitation would arise, and it was little short of a crime for any man to go over from this country and say that he had but one remedy—force. He begged to renew the Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chief Secretary."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

MR. WALTER LONG said he had listened to the criticisms made by the hon. and learned Member for Louth with some astonishment because he understood that there was a desire on the part of hon. Members on both sides of the House that he should not intervene in the debate before dinner. He took the view that it was right for him to hear what could be said in criticism from as many quarters as possible before he rose to reply. The hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Nationalist Party had taken him severely to task because, as the hon. Gentleman said, he had begun his career as Chief Secretary by confessing his entire inability to deal with the responsibilities of the office and his total ignorance of Ireland and Irish difficulties. The hon. Gentleman had not quite accurately expressed the opinions he uttered.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I quoted your own words.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes; but the deduction the hon. Gentleman drew from them was not quite fair. He did not know that it was very blameworthy to be a little modest as to one's personal ability. He did not say that he feared the responsibility or that he was not prepared to do the work to the best of his ability. All he did on coming new to one of the most important offices in the Government of the country was, naturally, to express the misgivings he had. He did not say he did not know anything of Ireland or her difficulties, and he thought it was not quite fair to translate what he had said into a confession of incompetence. Hon. Gentlemen had sought to show that in that speech he had also tried to throw discredit on the views of the Lord-Lieutenant when he dealt with the statement that the policy of the Irish Government had been, in 1902, to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas. He was not dealing in that speech with the declaration itself, or the question whether or not that ought to be the policy of the Irish Government. His point was that there was no precedent in the case of any Government, where there was a deliberate change of policy, where a new departure was to be adopted, for the announcement of that new departure being made by anybody but the responsible Minister. He asked what that phrase meant, and he found nothing in Lord Dunraven's pamphlet that gave him any information on the point. The debate had been mostly maintained from the other side of the House; and yet he was no wiser than at the beginning as to meaning of the phrase, "government according to Irish ideas."

Mr. DILLON: Why did the Cabinet instruct Lord Dudley to use that phrase in Ireland?

Mr. WALTER LONG: He never did anything of the kind, so far as I know.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In the words which I quoted, Lord Dudley said that he spoke for the Government, and he said that he personally agreed with that view.

Mr. WALTER LONG said that Lord Dudley never mentioned the Cabinet. But even if Lord Dudley said that he spoke on behalf of the Government as a whole, it was still permissible to ask Lord Dudley or anyone else what the expression meant.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In 1902, Lord Dudley used these words—

> "The opinion of the Government was, and it was also his opinion, that the only way to govern Ireland properly was to govern it in accordance with Irish ideas."

Mr. WALTER LONG said that the point was not whether Lord Dudley was authorised to speak on behalf of the Government or not. Before the Government were condemned by Lord Dunraven and hon. Gentlemen opposite as not being prepared to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas, they had a right to demand a clear explanation of the phrase. What the hon. Member for Waterford and his friends meant was perfectly well known. They had never altered their opinion, and they had been absolutely consistent during the twenty-five years they had been in the House. They had never altered their demand and the House knew what it was. If that was governing Ireland according to Irish ideas, then he must say it was a policy to which the Party to which he belonged must be unalterably opposed. Then it was asked, "Is your policy a changed one? Is conciliation a thing of the past?" He had never held that the so-called policy of conciliation was one that stood by itself, and was the opposite and antithesis of a policy of strong government. The two policies must go hand in hand if the prosperity of the country was to be secured. Reference had been made to his use of the stupid phrase "the chain" which connected the Irish Government with Ireland, and the hon. Member appeared to think that it referred to the chain that bound Ireland to the United Kingdom. It had never entered into his head to put any such construction on the use of that phrase. He used it in connection with the famous scheme of devolution. He pointed out that he thought devolution was not likely to command much support, and in connection with Irish Government the chain he meant was the various branches of the Irish Government under the Minister responsible for that Government, and that the links in that chain required strengthening. It never occurred to him that the use of the word "chain" could be interpreted as implying anything unpleasant or offensive to Ireland. Fault had been found with him also because he had poured scorn on the devolution scheme.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I did not say a word about the devolution scheme.

MR. DILLON: What we said was that you poured scorn on the observations of the Lord-Lieutenant that Ireland should be governed in future according to Irish ideas.

MR. WALTER LONG said he thought that the devolution scheme was mentioned, but now he understood that it had not even a friend to-day and was regarded as decently interred.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What about Wyndham?

MR. WALTER LONG said the mover of the Motion had made two accusations against the Government. The first was in connection with the administration of the Land Act. But since he had gone to the Irish Office he had devoted by far the largest share of his time to doing all he could to secure that the Land Act should be successfully and rapidly worked. [NATIONALIST cries of "Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member for East Mayo and others appeared to have some difficulty in believing that statement.

MR. DILLON: I do not disbelieve the right hon. Gentleman's statement, but I am afraid our ideas of what would be a successful working of the Act are very different.

MR. WALTER LONG said he should have thought that no matter how much they might differ politically their interpretation of the meaning of the word "success" did not need to be different. When he said "successfully" he meant that the Act of 1903 should be carried out to achieve the purpose for which it was passed, namely, that as rapidly as possible the land should be transferred from the present owners to those who were now occupying it; that there should as far as possible be a restoration of the evicted tenants, and an alteration in the economic holdings wherever that was possible. Hon. Members said that the operations of the Act had been delayed by the action of the Executive Government, and that there had been a non-application of the regulations issued by his predecessor. He knew of no mystery in this matter; he had nothing to conceal, and there was no reason why these operations should not be made public. He had to the best of his ability endeavoured to obtain all the information he could upon this question. When the Act came into operation and a certain amount of control was given to the Executive Government there were, he was informed, innumerable communications between the Executive Government and the Estates Commissioners, but he found no record of them; they appeared to have been of a verbal character. He was dealing now with regulations controlling the operations of the Estates Commissioners. So far as he knew no regulations of that kind were ever issued by his predecessor. It might be that the right hon. Gentleman was to blame for not issuing them; it might be that it would have been better to have issued them earlier. But the Act was new, the work thrown on him and the Estates Commissioners was laborious, and he thought they should be forbearing in any criticism passed on this branch of the question.

Mr. DILLON asked what was meant in the Report of the Commissioners by the reference to instructions from time to time from the Lord-Lieutenant. Were they to believe that there was no record of these instructions?

Mr. WALTER LONG said so far as he knew the instructions were verbal, and, though given in the name of the Lord-Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary was the Minister responsible for them. The hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that where the Chief Secretary was a member of the Cabinet he was responsible, although instructions were given in the name of the Lord-Lieutenant. It would be idle for him, and indeed it would appear to be an evasion, to throw upon the Lord-Lieutenant responsibility which properly belonged to his predecessor, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. When he first came into office and found no regulations had been issued, he at once proceeded to have regulations drawn up; and he had undertaken that they should be laid on the Table of the House, together with any alterations or amendments that might be made in them. To that he adhered, and beyond that he did not think it was possible for any fair-minded man to ask him to go.

Severe attacks had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and the hon. Member for East Mayo in reference to Section 5 and non-judicial tenants. Here, again, he was dealing with what had taken place before he took office as Chief Secretary; but, as he understood the position, communications passed between the Commissioners and the Executive Government, and the latter, after taking legal advice, expressed their view on their own responsibility. Obviously they were always entitled to fortify themselves by referring to their legal advisers or any other member of the Executive, but it was altogether contrary to practice and precedent to call upon a Minister to say upon whose authority he had given his opinion. The Minister was himself responsible. It was his duty to obtain the best and most reliable information he could get. Was it convenient or practicable to go behind the Minister and challenge him for the authority for the opinion he gave? In this particular case a view was expressed; but so far as he could ascertain there had always been a steadfast refusal on the part of the Executive Government to express a definite opinion as to the legal construction of the section, on the ground that Parliament had provided that such questions should be decided by the Judicial Commissioner, whose decision determined any such question, and any opinion not in accordance with it was set aside.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL asked why the Executive did not instruct the Estates Commissioners to refer that question to the Judicial Commissioner when first they came to the conclusion that the decision was not sound.

Mr. WALTER LONG said the hon. Gentleman had overlooked one detail. Under the Act the Executive had no power to order the Estates Commissioners or even to advise them to refer the general question. It only enabled them to advise reference when the question arose in a particular case, and it was when it arose in a particular case in this instance that they advised reference to the Judicial Commissioner. In fact, the Judicial Commissioner had definitely declined to deal with these questions when raised generally and in the abstract. Therefore the hon. Gentleman would see that there had been no improper action on the part of the Executive and no avoidable delay. In regard to these two charges which had been brought against the Executive he hoped he had shown that they were not guilty.

He now came to a charge which the hon. and learned Member for Waterford made against him, and which he confessed he heard made with astonishment. He had sat in the House for many years, and he had often listened with admiration to the hon. and learned Gentleman. He had watched his public action as leader of a Party in the House, with a growing conviction of his ability and power to lead. The hon. Member not only charged him with the old charge, which they had heard so often made before, of manufacturing bogus crime, but treated it as a sudden act on his part. [AN HON. MEMBER: No, not a charge against you.] Then if this charge was not against him, where was the change of policy? If it was not made against him, and if he was merely continuing the acts of his immediate predecessors, what was all this bother about? But this really was an old charge. The charge of which he complained, and which he thought unworthy of the hon. and learned Gentleman, was that he adopted a policy which had for its ultimate object the introduction of coercion, and that he had taken this course in order to secure the turning out of Dublin Castle of Sir Antony MacDonnell. That was a charge which no man ought to bring forward in the House of Commons against another unless he had abundant proof. It was absolutely false and without foundation. He did take exception to a charge that he had lent himself to a policy so cowardly and contemptible as that indicated by the hon. and learned Gentleman—namely, that he, who had power to dismiss any permanent official under him to-morrow if he thought fit, chose the indirect way of slowly forging a policy of coercion, not because he thought it necessary for the protection of life and property or in the interest of Ireland and the United Kingdom, but in order to get rid of a permanent official whom he could not get rid of in any other way. If that charge was true, what became of all the speeches they had listened to the other day from hon. Gentlemen opposite? One hon. Gentleman told them exultingly that he did not mind a change of Irish Secretary because he knew that as long as Sir Antony MacDonnell was at the Castle there would be no change of policy, that, to use a common phrase, the Under-Secretary would be top dog. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had said also that the Government could not part with Sir Antony MacDonnell because there was a correspondence which might be disclosed which would damage the Government, or that for some other reason they were afraid to part with him. But if that were true, what was the origin of the charge to-night? Was there ever so clumsy a policy ascribed to man as had been ascribed to him? In the first place it was suggested that here was a man whom he dared not part with, and then that he had got up the troublesome machinery of forging crime so as ultimately to adopt a policy of coercion in order to get rid of him. The charge was one quite unworthy of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and one he ought not to have made unless he had the strongest proof in its support. He absolutely repudiated the charge, for which there was not a shadow of foundation.

He rejoiced with the hon. and learned Gentleman that the condition of the greater part of Ireland showed material improvement, which he hoped would be maintained. As to the parts of Galway, Mayo, and Roscommon which had been referred to, in those particular districts there had been trouble for many years; twenty years ago it was probably the most disturbed part of Ireland, where crime was most prevalent. It was true that there was not now the overt crime there that there used to be, but there had been lately a very large amount, not of overt crime, but of action which was not only deplorable, but which if allowed to continue must undermine the whole foundations of society. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of receiving threatening letters; many of them had received such letters; but there was no comparison between the receipt of threatening letters by Members of that House and by isolated tenant farmers in the West of Ireland, especially when in the latter case there were also resolutions published in the newspapers passed by representatives of local associations all tending in one direction, all pointing out how certain desires could be gratified if such and such

measures were adopted. With regard to the prohibition of meetings in the West of Ireland, he believed that in the great majority of cases these meetings had little or no effect. While meetings had been from time to time, as he held, rightly prohibited, the great majority of meetings had been held without any interference. But to compare a meeting held in the neighbourhood of some small farmer occupying a grazing farm in the West of Ireland, with one of our Hyde Park demonstrations to denounce the millionaires of Park Lane, was not a true comparison. Was it likely that the same effect would be produced in the case of the millionaires as in the case of the small farmers.

He was charged with having embarked on a policy of coercion. What evidence was there for the charge that the Government were seeking to adopt a policy of coercion? There was no foundation whatever for that charge. But he lay under that charge, if it meant that so long as he was responsible for the Government of Ireland, he would do his best to protect the life and property of those who needed protection. It was not a charge against the people of Ireland to make that statement. On the contrary, it was an admission of the state of things which existed in a part of Ireland, and an assertion that the existence of that condition of things ought not to be permitted. He believed it would be found that in the last twenty-five years, while they had had to confront enormous difficulties, and Ireland had had much to suffer, she had made steady progress, and she was making progress now.

MR. FLAVIN: It is towards America.

MR. WALTER LONG said that, at all events, it was the duty and privilege of the Government to do all they could to develop Ireland's internal resources and to strengthen her industries. They were bound also to do that which appeared to excite so much contempt and scorn among hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that was to see that every man was free to work within the law according to his will and desire. The Government believed that that policy was essential to the happiness, not only of Ireland, but of the rest of the United Kingdom, and it was that policy that he should do his best to further.

MR. DILLON said on March 6th last the hon. Member for Waterford asked whether there were any instructions contained in the correspondence, and the Attorney-General for Ireland replied—

> "No regulations have been made; but instructions and orders are contained in the correspondence, which is confidential and cannot be laid."

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 98; Noes, 145. (Division List No. 181.)

AYES.

Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Chistopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hardie, J.Keir (MerthyrTydvil
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex.(Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col.John P.(Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Jospeh
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, George (Norfolk)
Woodhouse, Sir JT(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hn. A. J. (Manc'r.
Balfour, RtHnGerald W.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt.Hn.SirMichaelHicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hon.Sir JosephC.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, RtHnAilwynEdward
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J(Manc'r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, SirR.B (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, PhilipS.(Warwick, SW.
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, SirE W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Kennaway, Rt.Hn.Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, JohnGrant(YorksN.R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol, S)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott(Hants.)
Morgan, David J(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Stanley, EdwardJas.(Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J.M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Welby, SirCharles G.E.(Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon.John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E. R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (ST. PATRICK'S DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolution reported from the Select Committee.

"That, in the case of the Canals Bill, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

Report to lie upon the Table.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 26th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) [H.L.]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that no further Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1).

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Highland Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company. Petition of the Company praying leave to introduce a Bill "For increasing the capital of the South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company by the creation of paid-up shares, and providing for the issue thereof to the shareholders; and for other purposes," together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Corbett Estate Bill [H.L.]. Committed.

Bristol Corporation Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on May 18th, and Friday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

University College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill. Read 3^a, and passed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

London and North-Western Railway Bill; Rhondda Urban District Council Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Wrexham Gas Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Croydon Corporation Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Accrington Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (No. 89); Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill (No. 90); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (No. 91);

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (No. 92); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (No. 93); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill (No. 94). Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order).

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petition for early closing of; of Tooting Graveney Branch of Women's Total Abstinence Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3381. France (Bordeaux);
No. 3382. Turkey (Bussorah).

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT ACT, 1903.

Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of all his proceedings under the Act, for the financial year ended 31st March, 1905.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners:—

I. Modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of light railways in:—

(Portsmouth and Hayling Light Railway Order, 1905). The borough of Portsmouth, and in the rural district of Havant, in the county of Southampton, including a conveyor bridge over the LangstoneChannel.

(Campbeltown and Macrihanish Light Railway Order, 1905.) The county of Argyll, from Campbeltown to Macrihanish.

(Guildford Light Railways Order, 1905.) The parish of Stoke-next-Guildford, in the rural district of Guildford and in the borough of Guildford, in the county of Surrey.

II. Confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending:—

(Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Further Borrowing Powers) Order, 1905.) The Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Amendment) Order, 1901; and for other purposes.

(Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway (Speed Amendment) Order, 1905.) The Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway Order, 1897, as to speed.

MINES AND QUARRIES (GENERAL REPORT AND STATISTICS FOR 1904: PART I. DISTRICT STATISTICS).

Statistics of the persons employed, output, and accidents at mines and quarries in the United Kingdom, arranged according to the inspection districts.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS

Twenty-second Report of the Comptroller-General of patents, designs, and trade marks, with appendices, for the year 1905.

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS REGULATION ACTS, 1881 AND 1892.

Forty-first annual Report on alkali, etc., works by the chief inspector. Proceedings during the year 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

The following Lords were named of the Select Committee:—

L. Zouche.	L. Hylton.
L. Digby.	L. Burghclere.
L. Kenyon.	L. Allerton.
L. Stanley of Alderley	

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

TIMBER DECK-LOADS.

LORD MUSKERRY rose "To call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the carriage of timber deck-loads across the Atlantic in winter-time, and to refer to the steamers 'Majestic' of Hull, and 'Selma' of West Hartlepool, which have lately carried such deck-loads to the Continent, and, in consequence, have figured in the casualty list; to ask whether these casualties will be dealt with at a formal investigation, and whether the Board of Trade will furnish information showing the number of similar casualties during the past winter season; also whether His Majesty's Government have communicated with the Governments of other maritime Powers on the dangers of timber deck-loads, and, if so, what replies, if any, have been received." He said: My Lords, I trust you will pardon my once more bringing forward the subject referred to in my notice. I feel, however, that when human life is at stake, and when—I say it without hesitation—the lives of our seamen are being subordinated to sordid gain and thrown away, it is incumbent upon me to seek your Lordships' sympathy and assistance in requiring the Government to stop, once and for all, these outrageous risks to which our seamen are subjected.

On the last occasion when I introduced a Bill for this purpose I adduced evidence of a most positive character—the evidence of the Board of Trade's own tribunals—that great loss of life has occurred which, undeniably, was due to winter deck-loads. Even the law as it stands recognises the danger of such cargoes, for ships are forbidden to carry them to the United Kingdom in the winter season. But certain shipowners drive the proverbial coach and four through the law and send their ships to Continental ports to discharge their deck cargo, after which they come to this country to discharge the under-deck cargo. As I have again introduced a Bill to your Lordships which I consider will surmount those difficulties of combating the situation which appear to so much frighten the Board of Trade I do not propose to go over the whole ground of evidence.

To touch upon the two steamers mentioned in my notice, I have observed that the "Majestic," of Hull, arrived at Hamburg in the early part of April last, having lost her deck-load, her mainmast, and her rigging, and with her bulwarks, rail, and winches damaged. Your Lordships will see how narrowly a great disaster was averted, and you will fully appreciate the effect of great baulks of timber becoming freed from their lashings through bad weather and taking complete charge of the deck. I am assured by many merchant captains that bodily injuries to seamen caused in this way are frequent. The ss. "Selma" arrived, I noticed, at Bremen, having lost her deck cargo. This is the only detail I am in possession of. The loss of the deck cargo is, in itself, of no moment to me. The point I should like to emphasise is that the process of "losing" a deck cargo is an extremely dangerous one for the ship and for her crew. These casualties are reported on the Continent and would almost entirely escape notice if not brought forward in this way.

I contend that as I have received a good deal of support in this House when raising the question of these unjustifiable risks to life, it is a duty imperative on the part of the Board of Trade to themselves show that they are moving in the matter. Under pressure from the noble Marquess, Lord Ripon, it was said that the Government would take into their consideration the advisability of communicating with other Maritime Powers with a view to securing mutual co-operation in the matter. Now, whilst I would welcome this mutual arrangement were it found possible, and whilst I would be the last to advocate an unjustifiable increase in the already far too many disabilities on British shipowners, I can only characterise it as an absurd, and furthermore, an inhuman argument which urges that because a foreign shipowner may gamble with the lives of his employees it is only right that British shipowners should be allowed to do the same. This procrastination goes on, and, meanwhile, many of our seamen are, as a result, finding watery graves, and the agony of their last moments is accentuated by the thoughts of the heart-rending sorrow and distress of their wives and children and of the fact that it is we who turn a deaf ear to their entreaties for protection against these dangers.

Last year I appealed to your Lordships to pass my Bill and pointed out that the winter season was at hand. Apart from accidents such as I have now mentioned there are three steamers which carried, or, rather, attempted to carry, deck-loads across the Atlantic during the past winter of which all hope has been given up. Dead men tell no tales, and, when the inquiry comes on, those who are really responsible have the whole field of shelter open to them and they do not fail to take the utmost advantage of it. The Board of Trade have ordered inquiries into the losses of two of the steamers I have just mentioned, and therefore any comments on details must be reserved. I may inform your Lordships, however, that I have received a most pitiful letter from the father of one of the drowned men of the ss. "Nutfield." He is bereft of his son, upon whom in his old age he was greatly dependent, and, needless to say, he is distracted over his loss But he is only one of many who mourn for their relatives and friends whose lives have been sacrificed by the carriage of timber deck-loads in the winter time. Whilst regretting my inroads on your Lordships' time and consideration I trust to hear from the noble Duke, who on this occasion represents the Board of Trade, something more than the commonplaces which have been used on previous occasions to defeat an object the simple purpose of which is humanity to mankind. I also trust that some assurance will be afforded the House that His Majesty's Government are thoroughly alive to the serious responsibilities resting upon them in this matter, and intend to deal with it with resolution and dispatch, and make the Marine Department of the Board of Trade do its duty. I beg to ask the Questions standing in my name.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, the noble Lord did me the honour, when he introduced his Merchant Shipping Bill, of asking me to look into this question. I have made inquiries, and certainly the position is not satisfactory. The facts are, I believe, substantially as stated by the noble Lord. There is always some doubt whether the loss of any particular vessel is due to her carrying deck-cargo or not, because in many cases all we have is the sad and simple statement that such and such a vessel sailed and has not since been heard of. There is no doubt whatever in the minds of those who are best able to judge that in some, at least, of these catastrophes the loss is due to deck-cargoes. But I am not so sanguine as my noble friend in thinking that it is in the power of His Majesty's Government to put a stop to this unfortunate state of things. I am afraid that our legislation, as regards shipping, has gone as far as is wise, and the only effect of further legislation in this direction would be that these particular cargoes would be carried in foreign vessels, and lives would be lost all the same.

I venture to hope that His Majesty's Government will put themselves in communication with other countries, and induce them to adopt legislation similar to our own. The French, Germans, and Scandinavians do not wish their sailors to run these risks any more than we do, and I cannot help thinking that if His Majesty's Government would make strong representations to the other Maritime Powers, it might be possible to come to some arrangement on this subject. Their interests are really the same as our own, and a common agreement would save the lives of their sailors as well as ours.

There are other cognate questions—that of the load-line, for instance—on which it is very desirable that the maritime nations should act together. I believe that until lately we insisted on the load-line of foreign vessels coming into our ports being the same as our load-line, but in the case of German vessels we now accept a load-line adopted by Germany which does not give so much safety as our own. There are, moreover, other questions on which it is very desirable that the Maritime Powers should act together, and I hope His Majesty's Government will place themselves in communication with those Powers, and endeavour to arrive at some common action on these important questions.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, in the absence of the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Trade, I have been asked to reply to the noble Lord on behalf of that Department. I gathered from the remarks which fell from the noble Lord that he had no complaint to make concerning the rules and regulations which govern the entrance into our ports of ships which occasionally have too much deck-cargo. As the noble Lord is no doubt well aware, regular penalties are embodied in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, and the owner of a vessel who places too much deck-cargo on a ship entering English ports can be fined under that Act.

It is perfectly true, as the noble Lord stated, that English vessels plying between foreign ports carry in many cases too much deck-cargo, and there is nothing to prevent their doing so. There is, I believe, a law in existence, but the machinery for carrying it into effect is inadequate. Indeed, it is impossible to apply it. The noble Lord pointed out the risks that were in consequence incurred by the crews of those ships. and expressed the hope that in my reply I should not give expression to those commonplaces which have been used on previous occasions in these discussions. I am afraid that I shall probably incur the displeasure of the noble Lord, because I do not think I can throw any fresh light such as he would wish upon this particular point. Though there are casualties in respect of English ships plying between one foreign port and another, the noble Lord will see that each year the number has been diminishing, especially during the last five years. There are, however, as the noble Lord opposite (Lord Avebury) readily admitted, great difficulties in enforcing the suggestions which have been made. So far as I am aware the Board of Trade have no technical officers in any of the Continental ports, and thus there are no means of making an examination of English ships going from one foreign port to another.

LORD MUSKERRY: There are the Consular officers.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: In order to fulfil their duty in a proper manner these officers need a certain amount of technical knowledge, and I should have thought that it would not be wise to place the responsibility of a technical examination on the shoulders of our Consular officers. I doubt very much whether you would in that way achieve the object desired. There is another point. It would be impossible to exercise supervision over foreign ships entering foreign ports in the same way as the Government are being asked by the noble Lord to supervise English ships entering foreign ports. Consequently, even if we were able to put in force what the noble Lord desires, we should be placing restrictions on British ships which would not apply to foreign ships. I know that the noble Lord holds that that line of argument is an inhuman one, but I cannot help thinking that care must be taken not to place restrictions on our ships which would not apply to the ships of foreign nations, especially in view of the keen trading competition between ourselves and foreign countries.

In the two cases cited by the noble Lord—those of the "Majestic" and the "Selma"—I understand preliminary inquiries were held as to the casualties that befel these vessels. It was clearly established that there was no loss of life, that they completed their voyage, and that the casualties were entirely due to the rough weather they experienced. I am further informed that formal investigations are seldom held, unless it is clearly established that there has been either loss of the ship or of life, or injury to someone on board. This has not been so in the case of either of these two vessels, and I think the noble Lord will admit that there was no need to hold formal inquiries in their cases.

LORD MUSKERRY: I do not admit it.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The noble Lord finds himself in disagreement with me, but, after all, when it is clearly established that the vessels arrived at the port of destination, that there was no loss of life, and that the casualty was entirely due to rough weather, I really do not see the necessity of putting the great machinery of a regular formal investigation in force. The whole matter has been already cleared up at the formal investigation. The noble Lord is anxious to have information showing the number of casualties during the past winter season. I am happy to inform him that it is shown in the Board of Trade Return that this year there has been but one case of death, due to the man having been washed overboard in a storm, and in no way due to the manner in which the ship was loaded with deck-cargo.

The noble Lord inquired whether His Majesty's Government had communicated with the Governments of other Maritime Powers on the dangers of timber deck-loads. I understand that His Majesty's Government are in communication with foreign countries to see whether a definite understanding can be arrived at for drawing up restrictions and prohibitions against shipowners who overload the decks of their ships. At present no replies have been received. Foreign Powers are considering the proposals of the Government, and until the Foreign Office receive replies no statement on the subject can be made to your Lordships. I do not think I can give the noble Earl any further information on the points he has raised, but I can assure him that the Board of Trade have not lost sight of these matters and that they are fully alive to the dangers he has pointed out.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I have on former occasions addressed your Lordships on this matter, which has been so constantly brought forward by Lord Muskerry. I had the honour of being Chairman of the Committee which investigated most of these cases not long ago. We took a serious view of this matter, and thought the Board of Trade ought certainly to adopt some more active measures than they have done in investigating cases like this, and, if necessary, prosecuting. It is for that reason that I regret that Lord Wolverton, who was a member of the Committee, is not present to take part in the discussion. On a previous occasion Lord Wolverton, speaking on behalf of the Board of Trade, promised an inquiry into certain cases which were brought before your Lordships by the noble Lord who has raised this discussion to-day. I should like to know whether that inquiry has been held, whether a Report has been received, and, if so, whether it will be laid on the Table of the House. The question of getting foreign Governments to act in the same way as we do in this matter is, I know, a difficult one; but I cannot help thinking that it would be just as much in their interest to protect their people as it is in our interest to protect our own people, though they may not have the same immense concern in merchant shipping that we have. It would be a great thing if the noble Marquess the Leader of the House could persuade foreign Governments to make rules and regulations similar to our own in regard to this matter of deck-loading.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: In reply to the Question put to me by the noble Earl, I have to say that an inquiry has been ordered into the cases of the "Freshfield" and the "Nutfield," but, so far as I am aware, the result of the inquiry has not yet been published.

EARL SPENCER: It is a long while ago.

LORD MUSKERRY: Will the noble Duke say whether the inquiry has even taken place?

[No Answer was returned.]

House adjourned at five minutes past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 26*th May*, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time upon Monday next.

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill; Liverpool Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Skegness Water Bill. As amended, considered; a clause added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Sir HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That the parties opposing the Metropolitan Pneumatic Despatch Bill had stated that the evidence of Mr. Robert Bruce, Vice Controller of the London Postal Service, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Mr. Robert Bruce do attend the said Committee on Monday next, at Twelve of the clock.

Ordered, That Mr. Robert Bruce do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills on Monday next, at Twelve of the clock.

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).

Mr. de TATTON EGERTON reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That a communication had been received from Mr. Arkwright, one of the members of the said Committee, that he was unable, on account of domestic anxiety, to attend the Committee this day. Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Alexander Scott's Hospital Order Confirmation Bill; Grangemouth Waterworks and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill; Arbroath Corporation Water Order Confirmation Bill, without Amendment.

Seaham Gas Bill; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the Councils of the County Boroughs of Liverpool and Manchester, the County of Surrey, and the Urban District of Willesden, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts." [Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Nottingham to construct additional tramways; to make certain street improvements and waterworks; and for other purposes." [Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for transferring University College, London, to the University of London, and for other matters connected therewith; and for amending the University of London Act, 1898." [University College, London (Transfer) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Urban District Council for the Urban District of Whitby, in the North Riding of the county of York, to acquire the undertaking of the Whitby Harbour Trustees and the market rights within the district as well as certain lands; to make further provisions for the improvement and good government of the district; and for other purposes." [Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Mansfield with respect to their water undertaking; to make further and better provision in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other purposes." [Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer powers on the Urban District Council of Bangor, in the county of Down, for the construction of new waterworks; for the extension of their gas undertaking; for the regulation and control of the seashore and adjoining lands; and for the improvement and local government of their district; and for other purposes." [Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to rearrange the capital and amend the borrowing powers of the Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Company; and for other purposes." [Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords.]

Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; University College, London (Transfer) Bill [Lords]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords]; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [Lords]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 229.]

PETITIONS.

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Haddington, against; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS BILL.

Petition from Haddington, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Haddington, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Haddington, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from St. Frideswide's, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Haddington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Lewisham; and Weston-super-Mare; to lie upon the Table.

STREET BETTING BILL.

Petitions in favour; from the City of London; Haddington; and Kentish Town; to lie upon the Table.

TEINDS AND FIARS PRICES (SCOTLAND).

Petition from Haddington, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

Petition from the West Riding of Yorkshire, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS REGULATION ACTS, 1881 AND 1892.

Copy presented, of Forty-first Annual Report on Alkali, etc., Works, by the Chief Inspector, being for 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 173.]

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland of all his proceedings under the Act, for the year ended 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Copy presented, of General Report and Statistics for the year 1904, Part I. (District Statistics) Statistics of the Persons employed, Output, and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the United Kingdom, arranged according to the Inspection districts [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway Order, 1897, as to speed (Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway (Speed Amendment) Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the borough of Portsmouth and in the rural district of Havant, in the county of Southampton, including a conveyor Bridge over the Langstone Channel (Portsmouth and Hayling Light Railway Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the parish of Stoke-next-Guildford, in the rural district of Guildford and in the borough of Guildford, in the county of Surrey (Guildford Light Railways Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Argyll from Campbeltown to Machrihanish (Campbeltown and Machrihanish Light Railway Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Amendment) Order, 1901, and for other purposes (Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway (Further Borrowing Powers) Order, 1905) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR (COST) (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered March 9th; *Mr. Gibson Bowles*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 174.]

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS.

Copy presented, of Twenty-second Report of the Comptroller-General of Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks, with Appendices, for the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 175.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3381 and 3382 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Promotion of Assistant Clerks (Abstractor Class.)

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, in view of the statement contained in the recent reply from the Treasury to the petition from the assistant clerks (new class) that, under Clause 15 of the Order in Council of 29th November, 1898, the responsibility for recommending to their Lordships assistant clerks of the abstractor class for exceptional promotion to the second division rests with the heads of departments, and the number of such recommendations must necessarily depend on the opinion formed by heads of departments as to the qualifications of assistant clerks serving under them, whether he is aware that certain assistant clerks serving in the National Education Office, Dublin, were recommended for promotion to the second division more than a year ago; and whether, in view of the anxiety of these officials as to the recommendations made on their behalf, and the fact that some of them have been studying in preparation for the qualifying examination, he will take steps to have the matter looked into at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I cannot trace any letter to the Treasury in which the Irish Government have recommended the promotion of abstractors in the National Education Office.

Sick Leave in the Post Office—Case of Mr. Bullamore.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a telegraphist named Bullamore has submitted certificates from various medical men stating that he was suffering from nervous disorder and needed complete rest; that these certificates have been set aside by the Medical Department of the Post Office; that Bullamore has had a sum exceeding £9 sterling deducted from his wages by reason of his remaining from duty in obedience to the injunctions of his medical advisers; and that since that period the official medical officer has informed him that he can have six months holiday without pay; whether he can state why Bullamore, after being treated as a malingerer, is now being treated differently; and explain why he should not be treated as regards sick leave in the same manner as other Civil servants, seeing that Bullamore has been compelled to decline the offer upon financial grounds.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) For the information asked for in the first part of the hon. Member's Question, I must refer him to my Answers of the 15th † instant and 5th ‡ ultimo. Mr. Bullamore cannot be allowed pay for the period during which his absence was not covered by official medical certificate.

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† See page 265.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 443.

Recently Mr. Bullamore has been offered six months leave without pay. In view of the opinion expressed by the chief medical officer of the Post Office and the medical referee to the Treasury, I should not be justified in granting him sick leave with pay. There is no ground for considering that he is not being treated in the same manner as other Civil servants under similar circumstances.

Afghanistan.

COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): To ask the Secretary of State for India when the title of the Ruler of Afghanistan was altered from Amir to King, and his style from Highness to Majesty; what is the reason for the alteration; whether it has been notified by proclamation in Durbar; whether it makes any difference in regard to the relations of Afghanistan with foreign Powers; whether the letter from the Viceroy of India of 22nd February, 1883, referred to in paragraph 3 of No. 4 on page 6, and the Agreement of 1873 between Russia and England, referred to in No. 5 on page 7 of Cd. 2534 of 1905, can be printed and delivered to Members; and whether he will cause a map of Afghanistan, showing the boundaries agreed upon between the Government of India and the Amir, to be placed in the Tea Room.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) (1) The title of King was used by the late Amir of Afghanistan and was never questioned. Its use makes no difference in the relations of Afghanistan with foreign Powers so far as our Agreements with the Amir are concerned. (2) The Agreement with Russia of 1873 as to the boundaries of Afghanistan will be found in [Cd. 699] of 1873. It does not seem necessary to republish this Paper or the Viceroy's letter of 22nd February, 1883, which, as stated in the footnote to page 6 of the recent Parliamentary Paper, is printed on page 72 of [Cd. 3930] of 1884. (3) I will consider the question of preparing a map showing the frontiers of Afghanistan for the use of the House.

Escape of Convict Sheehan from Dundrum Lunatic Asylum.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the result of the inquiry held into the escape of convict Maurice Sheehan, on 10th March, 1903, from Dundrum Lunatic Asylum; whether he is aware that the governor got information from another convict on 9th January of Sheehan's intention of escaping from the workshop, and will he say what experience and length of service the attendant in charge of Sheehan had; and why he was forbidden to hold any conversation with the senior attendant in charge of the shops; did a special guard escort Sheehan from the workshops to the wards; whether, seeing that convict Feeley got through the bars and window of the workshop in March, 1902, and was injured, he will say what report did the governor make or what action did he take to secure the workshops; whether he will explain why the convict who gave information as to Sheehan's intention of escaping was locked up after the escape, and not liberated until after the inquiry was held; whether he is aware that the inspectors and the engineer responsible for the security of the workshops doubted the statement made at the inquiry on 20th March, 1903, by Attendant J. M'Keough as to Feeley and Sheehan getting through the bars and window, and that this statement was proved to be true; and if so, will he explain why M'Keough was called upon to resign.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The result of the inquiry was that certain structural improvements were made in order to guard against escape. The governor received information as mentioned, and the escort between the workshops and dining-hall was thereupon strengthened, as it was supposed that Sheehan would attempt to escape when passing between those places. The attendant in immediate charge of Sheehan had six months service, but the senior attendant in charge of the workshop in which he worked had many years service. The attendant was not forbidden to converse with the senior attendant. The escort was strengthened as above stated. Convict Feeley temporarily escaped from the workshop, but it was not ascertained that he had got through the window bars. The bars were, however, examined by the responsible official, but no alteration was considered necessary. No patient was locked up in connection with Sheehan's escape, but the patient who had given information of the intended escape was about that time placed in seclusion for irritating a fellow patient. It was proved that a man could get through the window bars, but it was also proved that Sheehan escaped by removing one of the bars by means of a turnscrew. There was no connection between Sheehan's escape and Attendant M'Keough's dismissal. M'Keough was called upon to resign for insubordinate conduct and failure to satisfactorily discharge his duties. He refused to resign, and was dismissed.

Waveney School, Ballymena.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how long Waveney School, Ballymena, was in operation before objection was made to its application for aid upon the ground that the temporary premises were unsuitable and insanitary; and what was the nature of the sub-inspector's report upon the condition of the school premises.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The school was opened on August 1st, 1903. The Commissioners' objection to granting aid has from the outset been that the school is not required in the locality. It was not until March, 1905, that, in replying to an application for temporary aid, the Commissioners referred to the unsuitable and insanitary nature of the premises, and then the reference was merely incidental, and was added to a reiteration of the primary objection, namely, that the school was unnecessary. The inspector who reported against the application on the ground that the school was unnecessary, stated in addition that one of the rooms was only 19 feet long by 8½ feet wide, that the house was a temporary one, and that two of the walls were roughly plastered and washed with colour, while the others were boarded.

Guy's and Waveney Schools, Ballymena.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say when application was first made to the Commissioners of National Education for a grant for the rebuilding of Guy's Schools, Ballymena; when the Board's inspector reported thereon; whether a site has yet been procured and approved of by the Commissioners; and whether, seeing that one of the Board's senior inspectors reported the necessity for additional suitable accommodation which has not yet been provided, he will explain why this same necessity is now denied in the case of the application for aid to Waveney School, Ballymena, and the grant withheld.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The application was received on April 5th, 1902, and the inspector's report on May 13th, 1902. As, however, the Commissioners did not regard the case as urgent, its further consideration was postponed pending a decision on the question of proposed new regulations for building grants. But as the delay in deciding this question has been greater than was anticipated, the Commissioners have provisionally sanctioned a grant under the existing regulations. A site has been provided, but will not be approved until the plans of the proposed building have been submitted to and approved by the Commissioners. It is proposed to supersede the existing building, not so much on account of the insufficiency of the accommodation afforded by it, as on the ground of its general unsuitableness for school purposes. Aid to the Waveney School was refused on the grounds that the pupils were largely withdrawn from other schools, that sufficient school accommodation already existed in Ballymena, and that applications for more extensive and suitable premises for three of the existing schools were pending. Moreover, the Waveney School premises were reported as unsuitable and insanitary.

CANALS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER called the attention of the House to the fact that one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills had reported that the

Standing Orders applicable to the Bill had not been complied with, and that the Select Committee on Standing Orders had reported that the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with.

Whereupon the Order was discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for the Second Reading read.

Mr. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said that the question of the closing of the public-houses on Sunday was so well understood that it would not be necessary for him to trouble the House with many observations in moving the Second Reading of the Bill. It was sometimes suggested that this Bill had not behind it any very large body of public opinion; but he would venture to point out that no petition had ever been presented to this House signed exclusively by working men, and no Resolution had ever been passed during the last fifty years by any trade organisation or trade federation directly representing the working classes, against a Sunday Closing Bill.

Mr. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.) called attention to the fact that there were not forty Members present.

After an interval, numbers were counted and forty Members being present,

Mr. PERKS resumed his speech. He said that the history of this measure was well known. For fifty years Scotland had enjoyed the benefits of absolute Sunday closing; and not only had no proposition come from Scotland backed by any section of political or religious opinion in favour of the abolition of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, but every Royal Commission which had had to deal with the licensing question had pointed out the great benefits which Scotland had derived from the adoption of that measure. In Ireland since 1878 there had been a successful working of the universal Sunday Closing Act, subject to the exclusion of five of the large cities in Ireland. In passing he might point out that the exclusion of these five cities was adopted on an Amendment moved in Committee on the original Bill. In Wales, since 1888, there had been Sunday closing in operation, and that had met with the approval not merely of the temperance party, but of the whole population in Wales, and of all the political representatives of that country with the exception of two. The Royal Commission appointed to investigate this very question of the application of Sunday closing to the big cities of Cardiff and Swansea in 1890, declared that they had found an almost complete absence of any desire for an amendment of the law. The most recent Licensing Royal Commission endorsed that decision, and there was nothing in either the Majority or Minority Report which suggested an amendment of the existing law in Scotland, Ireland, or Wales. In the Isle of Man there was universal Sunday closing; and so also in most of the British Colonies. And in every State in the United States, with one exception, the public-houses were closed on Sunday. He cited these facts for the purpose of negativing the theory that the working classes in our great cities would not accept such a Bill as was now proposed, on the ground that it would be an interference with public liberty and the rights of adult labour.

Passing from that point to the efforts made from time to time to pass such a measure as this the Second Reading of which he was now moving, in 1888 a measure of a similar description was submitted to the House by the then Conservative Government. The Local Government Bill of 1888, which was endorsed by the right hon. Member for Croydon, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. Matthews, and the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, contained clauses providing for Sunday closing at the option of the county councils. For some reason, into which he would not further inquire, the clauses in that Bill dealing with licensing and Sunday closing were withdrawn, but, at all events, he pointed out that that was a clear and distinct proposition from the then Conservative Government—one of whose members now sat on the Treasury

Bench—that the county councils should have the power of Sunday closing. The next attempt made to deal with the subject was in the Bill introduced by the late Sir William Harcourt, who proposed to give to the local ratepayers, by a direct vote, the absolute right to close public-houses on Sunday. The Royal Commission which had to deal with this subject more recently did not recommend universal Sunday closing. The minority, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and four Members of this House, recommended the closing of the public houses on Sunday except for one hour in the middle of the day; and for two hours in the evening. The Majority Report stated that—

> "To enact complete Sunday closing throughout England would be, in our judgment, at the present time, a step far in advance of public opinion. We are, however, prepared to recommend the further curtailment of the time of opening to two hours at mid-day and two hours in the evening as a maximum. It would be advisable to leave London and the principal cities outside of the operation at least for a time."

That clause had been carefully prepared by the majority of the Royal Commission, of which two of the members were immediately connected with the liquor trade; and it clearly and manifestly contemplated the possibility of public opinion being in favour of Sunday closing in the early future. The Minority Report went a little further and said that—

> "Some districts in England would probably be in favour of entire Sunday closing while others would strenuously resist."

It was not, he thought, necessary for him to refer to the various arguments which, for many years past, had been adduced in support of this measure. There had been an increasing tendency to curtail the hours of labour in all classes of the community and in every branch of commerce and industry; and that ought to find some recognition on the part of traders connected with the sale of intoxicating liquor. It did not seem to him reasonable that the owners of these great establishments and the shareholders who benefited so considerably from them, should not contribute their fair share towards the hours of relaxation which the employees in this country were obtaining in an increasing degree. It was clear, from the figures adduced before the last Royal Commission, that the hours of labour of the employees in the 180,000 public-houses in this country were, on the average, very much longer and more arduous than those of the average employees in other industrial and commercial undertakings. There were cases in which people employed in public-houses were kept on duty from 100 up to 115 hours per week.

Now, this was a trade which was almost the last to be entitled to claim a preferential treatment, either on economic or commercial grounds. There was very little doubt, although they could not expect the men who were closely identified with the trade to admit the proposition, that the excessive taking of alcoholic liquor was the main cause of poverty, crime, and physical deterioration in this country to many thousands of our fellow-subjects. Therefore, he could see no reason whatever why the owners of distilleries, breweries, and public-houses should come to this House and claim preferential treatment for the sale of their goods over the baker, the grocer, the butcher, and every other trader. Experiments in other parts of the United Kingdom had proved Sunday closing to be an undeniable success, and, as the liquor trade was a monopoly, the nation was entitled to apply to it far more rigid conditions than it should apply to the ordinary trade which claimed from the State no such monopoly. Should the Bill pass the Second Reading, it would be open for any hon. Member to suggest limitations of the hours or of the cities to which it should apply. Having regard to the frequent declarations of the predecessors of the Government that they were ardent supporters of temperance reform and the overwhelming body of public opinion which was behind this measure, he hoped that the Government would support it or leave their followers to support it as they thought proper.

Mr. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston), in seconding the Second Reading of the Bill, said that the consumption of whisky had diminished in Scotland, comparing the seven years before and the seven years after the passing of the Sunday Closing Act, from 37,000,000 gallons to 27,000,000, or a fifth of the total amount of consumption. This might have been due to some extent to the increased duty on spirits during the latter period; but all authorities were agreed that the reduction was more greatly due to legislation. The statistics clearly showed that the amount of Sunday drunkenness was reduced in Scotland to an extraordinary extent. In Edinburgh it was less by one-fourth, and in other cities the reduction was even greater. The Royal Commission of 1860 said the improvement in large towns had been most remarkable; that the employers and employees were unanimous in testifying to the great improvement in the regularity of attendance of workmen at work on Monday mornings, and that the cessation of business on Sunday was regarded as a great boon by publicans. The Report also stated there was no evidence that home drinking had increased, and that if there had been drinking elsewhere than in the public-houses the total amount of consumption of whisky could not have diminished by one-fifth. No section of the Scotch community now advocated the Sunday opening of public-houses. There was far too much theorising as to what would happen in considering this question, and far too little done in the way of examining what had happened. The Commission reported that the improvement in the great towns had been most remarkable; and that, whereas previously on Sunday mornings a number of persons in every state of intoxication were seen to issue from public-houses to the great annoyance of respectable inhabitants proceeding to church, now the streets were quite orderly, and few cases of drunkenness were to be seen. There was the most complete evidence as to the beneficial effect of the Sunday Closing Act in Scotland. Opinion in Scotland was absolutely in favour of it. Hon. Members representing Scottish constituences might vote against a Bill applied to England; but not one hon. Member would vote for the repeal of the Act in Scotland. If it were possible to increase industrial efficiency, to reduce the hours of that section of the community which worked longer than any other, to diminish drunkenness, and to bring comfort into miserable homes by this Bill, any hon. Member voting against it would incur the gravest responsibility. If the Bill were given a Second Reading, it could, if necessary, be modified in Committee; but in the circumstances he could not imagine any hon. Member voting against it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said there were reasons of no partial character why the House should not adopt this proposal. In making that statement he spoke as a sincere advocate of temperance and of due restrictions on a trade which for a long period had been recognised to require careful regulation. As a county magistrate in Scotland, a former Scotch Member, and later an English Member, he had taken an active interest in the passing of measures intended to prevent the mischief which had attended the trade. Therefore it was without fear of misconception, but with a sincere belief that it was undesirable to carry restriction too far, and, in the interest of social reform, to interfere too much with the liberty of the subject, that he opposed the Bill.

Undoubtedly the supporters of the measure were actuated by the highest motives, but the analogy between the working of a similar measure in Scotland and in this country might be carried too far. It was not the case that there never had been objections to the working of the Scotch Act, or petitions for its abolition. About twenty years ago a Royal Commission inquired into the working of the Act and arrived at the conclusion that its operations should not be interrupted. The evils of Sunday drinking in Scotland had been very great, but in Scotland the use of the public-house was different from what it was in England. The public-house in this country was the cellar of the working-classes, who could not keep a supply of liquor in their houses as wealthier people did, and consequently were dependent on the retailer. For many years he had represented an English constituency composed mainly of working people, and he knew how the public-house was regularly used for the supply of the family beer for dinner or supper. He thought it was better for a working man to send for a jug of beer and drink it in the midst of his family than to sit in a public-house. If the drinking of beer was an evil *per se*, he believed that far more mischief was caused to the race by the excessive use of tea than of beer. In his own district in Scotland a doctor had told him that the deterioration in the race, and especially the premature decay of the teeth, was mainly attributable to over-indulgence in tea. If he were going to interfere with the liberty of the subject and put a restriction on their daily drink, he would prohibit the infusion of tea for more than two minutes and the drinking of more than a certain quantity per day.

It had been said that the British Colonies nearly everywhere had adopted Sunday closing, but when he went as Governor to South Australia he was amused to find that the Licensing Act provided that, whereas the front door of a public-house must not be open on Sunday, the back door might be. He admitted that good had come from the limitation of the hours of opening on Sunday, and if the measure had simply proposed to further shorten the hours he would have been glad to see it obtain a Second Reading. But this was a hard-and-fast Bill, which they must take or leave.

Mr. CORBETT: What modifications would the right hon. Gentleman be prepared to accept?

Sir J. FERGUSSON said a further limitation in the number of hours that public-houses might be open on Sunday. The limitations, the right hon.Gentleman continued, must differ in accordance with the requirements of particular localities. There was no doubt a serious responsibility attaching to any one who voted against the Bill. Well, he was prepared to undertake that responsibility, and one need not shrink from it when the results of Sunday closing were examined. Take the case of Wales. The chief constable of the county of Monmouth last year stated to his standing joint committee that in the neighbouring counties where the sale of beer was prohibited on Sundays the drunkenness was in excess of that in the counties where there was no such prohibition. Again, the quinquennial averages showed that the number of convictions for drunkenness on Sundays in Scotland where prohibition prevailed was greater than in England where there was no prohibition. Only on the preceding day they were told by an hon. Member from Ireland that there was a greater preponderance of crime in Ulster than in other parts.

Mr. CORBETT: We did not think it worth while to contradict that.

Sir J. FERGUSSON said he did not know whether it was the fact, and indeed he did not care to use it as an illustration in order to say that there was more drunkenness in Ulster where there was prohibititon than in England where there was none.

Mr. CORBETT: As a matter of fact the number of convictions is less than before prohibition was introduced.

Sir J. FERGUSSON said he opposed the measure because he thought it would prove oppressive to many people to whom the accommodation of public-houses on Sunday was perfectly harmless, and he believed that an undue increase of restriction would do more harm than good.

Mr. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) sincerely respected the views of hon. Gentlemen who were promoting the Bill and hoped that they would give him credit for equal disinterestedness. He, as much as they, desired to promote temperance, and last year he supported the proposal that there should be imposed on successful applicants for new licences the duty of providing suitable refreshments at the risk of having their licences taken away. He was also in favour of movements like the public-house trust movement, but he was forced to confess that the measure now before the House did not derive support from the result of the working of a similar measure in Scotland. One difficulty was as to the providing of beer for Sunday drinking, and he did not think there could be any reasonable objection to the Sunday sale of beer during a limited number of hours, or even to its consumption in the public-houses during those hours. He agreed with the recommendation of the Royal Commission in favour of a curtailment of the hours of sale. Let them have a maximum of two hours in the day and two hours in the evening, with a proviso that London and other large cities should be left out of the operation of the measure. It was a mistake to introduce a drastic measure of this kind, and he wondered why hon. Members opposite had not brought in a more moderate measure. He would not dwell on the pernicious effect of tea as compared with beer. He remembered that on that point some very remarkable evidence was given before the Physical Deterioration Committee.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): Does tea drinking promote crime?

MR. MOON said he believed that excessive tea-drinking conduced to lunacy. He feared that the Bill would produce a great deal of secret drinking, and another point was that people would take home for Sunday consumption more powerful alcoholic drink than beer. The tendency would be to drink spirits. As he believed the Bill would not conduce to temperance, he seconded the Motion for its rejection.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir J. Fergusson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.) supported the Bill, and said that the manner in which its rejection had been moved and seconded marked a considerable advance of public opinion in its favour. The quotations made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester from the recommendations of the Royal Commission were really in support of this Bill, because the Commission reported in favour of the continuance of the Scotch and Welsh Acts. It seemed as if this question resolved itself into a question of bottled *versus* draught beer. If it could be shown that the working classes, for whom the mover of the rejection claimed to speak, could obtain their beer as cheaply, and that it would keep as well obtained on Saturday night as on Sunday, then the opponents of the Bill gave up the whole position. He was not a sufficiently good judge of the qualities of beer to know whether beer purchased on Saturday night would keep until Sunday dinner, but he was sure that if the problem reduced itself to that infinitesimal point the case had gone altogether, because the overwhelming advantages of Sunday closing in other respects would not be denied.

He declined to follow the argument whether or not the excessive use of tea was more injurious than the excessive use of alcoholic liquors, because it had been reduced to a point of absurdity. The pertinent question was whether the use of tea produced poverty, crime, and other evils which undoubtedly followed the use of intoxicants. It could not honestly be contended that there was any comparison whatever between the excessive use of tea, which no doubt produced injurious physical effects, and the excessive use of alcohol, which produced a variety of crime.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I never said that the excessive use of tea was worse than the excessive use of beer. I said it was worse than the habitual use of beer.

MR. GEORGE WHITE said he was not defending the excessive use of tea, therefore the argument appeared to have no relevancy whatever.

The position in this House was far behind that of public opinion in the country. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had entirely failed to show why England should be at a disadvantage as compared with Scotland and Wales with regard to a law of this kind. There was no difference between England and Scotland as far as the conditions and needs of the people were concerned, and the gin palace was equally a temptation and an evil whether it was in the streets of Glasgow or of London. But they were accustomed to seeing given to the northern part of the Kingdom advantages and privileges which were denied to England, and he was really jealous that Scotland should have enjoyed for nearly half a century advantages in this matter which, although demanded by a large majority of the people, could not be secured for England. Almost without exception those who specially represented the working classes in the House were in favour of a measure of Sunday closing, but their testimony was absolutely ignored or set aside as of no value. Personally he had a great deal to do with working men, meeting some hundreds weekly, of whom probably not ten per cent. were total abstainers, but he had found scarcely one respectable artisan who desired the continuance of the Sunday opening of public-houses. Those who waited so earnestly for the opening of the public-house doors on Sunday were the men who had been the victims of excessive drinking on Saturday—the section of men who were destructive of the industrial pre-eminence of the nation, a burden upon the class to which they belonged, frequently the main instrument in breaking down their trade union efforts, and in other ways a detriment to the general advancement of the working classes. Why should advantages accruing from Sunday closing be foregone at the instigation of this small section of the population, while the great majority of the respectable artisan class were in its favour?

It was said that the trade demanded no special treatment. But they already had special treatment, and it was of that that he and others complained. Moreover, Sunday closing was demanded in the interests of labour, it having been shown that this was one of the most deadly trades in the country, and that those who were engaged in it had shorter lives than almost any other class of the community. He had been surprised that the large body of working men who demanded shorter hours for themselves had not raised a great outcry against the long hours worked by barmaids and barmen; and the addition of a certain number of hours of Sunday labour constituted a hardship against which, in the interests of labour, a protest should be made. Although he did not expect great things from the present Parliament, he thought it was right that this question should be kept before the public, and therefore he hoped the Bill would be read a second time, if only as an indication that the House still reflected to a certain extent the opinion of the nation.

*MR. HUGH SMITH (Northumberland, Tyneside), in supporting the Second Reading, said the promoters of this Bill had been twitted on the fact that they had not brought in a measure for curtailing the hours of Sunday opening rather than one for entire closing, and the mover and seconder of the rejection had indicated that they would have supported a Bill drawn on those lines. He would point out, however, that at the beginning of the session many Members ballotted for the purpose of bringing in such a measure, but were unsuccessful, and therefore they had to support, as they willingly did, the present Bill. Early next week a Bill would be introduced in another place dealing with the curtailment of Sunday hours and the earlier closing on week nights, which was almost as necessary as Sunday closing. As a supporter of the Government he had on many occasions defended what they had done in the way of licensing reform. In 1901 the Government gave their support to a Private Bill introduced by the other side, and it was solely through their agency that the country secured the beneficial provisions of the Child Messenger Act. Then, too, there were the Licensing Acts for Scotland and this country. Although possibly in the English Act they did not get all they wanted, still it was a great measure, and the consciences of the justices having been awakened, there were at present a number of public-houses being closed in centres of population which would not have been closed but for that Act. Therefore, whatever else might be said against them, he thanked the present Government for what they had done in the way of licensing reform.

The question had been asked whether the public really wanted Sunday closing.

Statistics had been circulated showing that 85 per cent. of the people canvassed were in favour of entire Sunday closing as compared with 15 per cent. against, so that a vast majority of the working classes were in favour of the proposal before the House. Many, also, who were inside the houses themselves would be in favour of such a measure. The employees in receipt of a weekly wage would be only too glad to have the Sunday rest, and many men engaged in tied houses would be entirely in its favour. He admitted that there was a considerable body of opinion in favour of public-houses being open the whole of the day, and many people felt that they could not support the entire closing. But the opponents of the Bill had expressed a willingness to accept a limitation of Sunday hours, and the mover had promised that in Committee any suggestion of that sort should receive favourable consideration. There was a consensus of opinion on both sides that some reduction of hours was necessary, and if they were drawing closer one to another there ought surely to be some *via media* by which the Bill might become law. He therefore supported the Second Reading, because if the Bill did not pass nothing in the way of limitation could be done, whereas if it did pass there would be a chance of some limiting powers being inserted, of which perhaps he was more in favour than entire Sunday closing. He was not sure that the country was yet ripe for entire Sunday closing, but it was ripe at any rate for a limitation of Sunday hours, and therefore he gladly supported the Second Reading of the present Bill.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said his hon. friend who had just sat down appeared to have developed an argument which showed that he was only a half-hearted supporter of this Bill. [Cries of "No, no."] The hon. Member had stated that it was impossible to close wholly on Sundays. He could not see how that tallied with his statement that 85 per cent. of the people were in favour of total closing. He did not think that the 85 per cent. who were said to be in favour of this measure would contradict themselves to such an extent as to go to a public-house on Sunday; therefore there was only 15 per cent. of the population who desired to go to public-houses on Sunday.

MR. HUGH SMITH said he meant 85 per cent. of those who had been canvassed.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said that the figures really meant 85 per cent. of those who had taken the trouble to record their votes and not 85 per cent. of the population. There were a large number of people who did not declare their opinion either one way or the other. He did not think it was fair to say that the majority of the people were in favour of Sunday closing. One objection to this Bill was that it had only been printed on Wednesday last, and it had hardly been possible for hon. Members to get up any statement of facts against the Bill. No doubt the promoters had been able to get all their statements and facts ready, but those who were opposed to legislation of this kind had not been able to look into the matter.

MR. PERKS said the same Bill had been introduced for the last twenty years, and the hon. Member would have no difficulty, because he was bringing forward the same arguments that he had used on a former occasion.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said he hoped that the effect of the few remarks he was about to make would be that this Bill would share the fate of former Bills of this kind, and that it would not be allowed to pass into law.

There were really only two arguments that could be brought forward in favour of this measure. The first was the argument of those who thought that Sunday trading in all its forms was objectionable. He was not in favour of the Continental Sunday, and perhaps they were getting a little too much towards that. The old English Sunday was perhaps as good as they would wish to keep, and as good as could be devised. But the object of hon. Members actuated by that feeling could only be obtained if they extended this Bill to other drinkables. If the milkman could sell his milk on Sunday, why should the publican not be allowed to sell his beer? The hon.

Baronet the Member for Camborne was, no doubt, animated by a totally different state of mind, because he thought that drinking was wrong and ought to be stopped.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I do not think drinking milk does any harm.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said that hon. Members opposite would not gain their object by voting for this Bill, because for six days of the week people would still be able to go to public-houses. The supporters of this Bill seemed to have caught the Sabbatarians, and they were trying together to pass a measure which would be the thin end of the wedge, and that would be advanced as a reason for further legislation in this direction. It had been said that the public-house was the cellar of the working man, whilst hon. Members of this House had mostly cellars of their own. He believed his hon. friend behind him had a cellar of his own, although he had not had the good fortune of being entertained at his house. He understood, however, that his hon. friend in front of him, the Member for North Ayrshire, had dined at the hon. Member's house and had been supplied with some very good liquor of an intoxicating nature.

MR. CORBETT: Yes, but he will never get it again.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said he did not see why working men unable to keep a sufficient quantity of beer in their houses should be prevented from going to the public-houses during reasonable hours on Sunday to obtain what they desired. Because some people made beasts of themselves, were they going to prevent sane and reasonable men from taking what was really good for them. He believed that alcoholic liquors in moderation were a good thing for people. He remembered a test which was made in the hayfield during harvest time. A certain number of men were put to the task of seeing how many loads they could carry and they were allowed to drink water only; a similar number of men were given beer to do the same task, and the people who drank the beer did a great deal more work than those who drank water. He agreed with all that had been said about the evils of excessive drinking, but those were not evils connected with drinking in moderation. There appeared to be an ever-increasing desire to regulate everything by the State, but if they wanted to make people sober, industrious, and hardworking they should leave them to work out their own salvation in this respect. They could always do very much more by example than by continually putting forward measures to compel people to do something which they did not want to do. Thirty or forty years ago it was a common thing for people amongst the better classes to be found in a state of intoxication after dinner, and at that time it was not considered a very disgraceful thing. But now things had changed and they very seldom saw anything of the kind, and young officers in the Army seldom got into that state. The people had become more sober because the forces of education and example had shown that they were much better off by drinking in moderation.

He thought the statement that Sunday closing in Wales and Scotland had been successful was not altogether borne out by the facts. On January 11th, 1895, the stipendiary magistrate in Cardiff, speaking in reference to a number of cases of illicit drinking which were brought before him, said that if the cause was the harsh and too arbitrary limitation of the time during which liquor could be obtained, the Legislature might so relax the law as to lessen the temptation to resort to unlicensed premises. He further stated that if the difficulties in suppressing the liquor traffic were due to defects in the law which could be remedied without interference with the comfort and liberties of the people, it was to be hoped in the interests of good order and the removal of a public scandal that a remedy might be found and applied. Those were the opinions of one who was well able to judge of the results of Sunday closing. They did not go to show that Sunday closing had been a success. On a general holiday recently in Glasgow the public-houses were closed, and a very large number of people went to a neighbouring place where they could obtain drink. They drank all the drink that was to be had in the public-houses, and the publicans were obliged to close their premises because they were no longer able to sell drink.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I think the public-houses closed in the afternoon on account of the tumult.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY: I thought it was because the people were so disappointed that they could not get more drink.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: The tumult was due to the drink.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY thought what occurred on the occasion referred to showed that the closing of the public-houses was not altogether a success. He admitted that what had been said in regard to privileged travellers who obtained refreshments was rather a good point. The closing of public-houses did tend to encourage people to travel in order to get drink. Perhaps that might be good for the railway companies, but it had been stated that the facilities given by the railway companies for taking people away from the public-houses had advanced the cause of temperance. It appeared that the railway companies might also take people to places where they could get drink if they travelled a sufficient distance. The Return for 1903, the last which was available, showing the number of convictions for the illicit sale of intoxicants, stated that in England there were 280 and in Wales 124, which, taking the proportion of population into consideration, meant that there were nearly seven times as many convictions in Wales, where a Sunday Closing Act was in force, as in England, where Sunday closing was not in force. These facts and figures showed that England was in a better position than Wales, and he thought it was in a better position than Scotland. The best thing they could do in England was to remain as they were.

He did not think this Bill, if passed, would do what the promoters desired. He associated himself with the right hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of the Bill in crediting everyone who supported it with being actuated by the best of motives. He hoped they would in return concede to those who opposed it that which was conceded to them. It was a very great mistake to attempt to force people to do something which, so long as they did not do it in excess, was not only not harmful, but good for them. He did not go quite so far as his right hon. friend in saying that the drinking of tea caused people to lose their teeth. It seemed to him that the tendency of all this grandmotherly legislation was to bring about an absurd state of things. If they were never to be able to do what they liked without being inspected by the county council, or temperance associations, or other bodies, however legitimate and good their aims might be, they would do a great deal to destroy the self-reliance and sturdy nature which had always been attributed to Englishmen. He was sorry that he had not been able to bring forward any more weighty argument, not that he did not think those which he had advanced were weighty. If he had had more time to look into the subject he might have brought forward other arguments, but there had been some delay due to hon. Gentlemen opposite in the printing of the Bill. He was not so sanguine as to believe that his arguments would convert hon. Gentlemen opposite.

*MR. HUGH SMITH: May I be allowed to give the hon. Baronet another reason? Under the new Licensing Act the magistrates have full control in the granting of new licences as to opening and closing on Sunday.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said he considered that a strong argument against the Bill. What was the use of bringing in the Bill if the magistrates had full power to do what they liked? He thanked his hon. friend for giving him that argument. It was so strong that nothing further need be said.

On the resumption,

*MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) said that in Scotland they all knew what a blessing the Sunday Closing Act had been there, and they wished to give their brethren in South Britain, otherwise called England, a similar benefit. He would challenge the Under-Secretary for the Home Department, who represented North Ayrshire, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester, who, like himself, had represented South Ayrshire, to attempt to condemn the Act in Scotland. He hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading. Scotland would not be prepared to return to the state of affairs before the passing of the Act. It was stated that the state of teeth was due to the drinking of tea. He himself had a painful interview with his dentist yesterday, and he was assured that the trouble in connection with teeth was not caused by tea. His dentist asked him if Scotchmen suffered from their teeth, and he was informed that it was the absence of lime in the water that to a certain extent accounted for their bad teeth. The tannin in the tea was good for teeth. He, himself, was not a total abstainer, although he was a promoter of temperance. They had been told during the debate that the public-house was the poor man's cellar, and if that were so the poor man ought to be allowed to keep it. The hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham stated that a labourer working at haymaking was more successful if he drank beer rather than water. Lord Roberts, on the other hand, stated that men who were total abstainers marched farther and better than men who were accustomed to take alcohol even not to excess. He was quite certain that neither the Member for North Ayrshire nor the right hon. Member for North-East Manchester would move the repeal of the Scottish Act. He accorded the right hon. Gentleman credit as being earnest in the cause of temperance reform.

The hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham spoke of disgraceful scenes which had occurred at Paisley, but that had no reference to the Bill before the House because the event did not occur on Sunday. The incident was very grossly exaggerated, as he personally knew. From his experience in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, Sunday closing was a success. The hon. Member also said if people were allowed to sell milk on Sunday they should be allowed to sell beer. It was evident the hon. Member was not acquainted with the Shorter Catechism and could not distinguish between works of "necessity and mercy" and other works. A servant in Scotland objected to any work on the Sunday other than that of milking the cows, because they could not milk themselves and the milk had to be sold when it was fresh, while beer improved with a little age. An hon. Gentleman opposite said that babies were better brought up on beer, but in his opinion that was ridiculous. He supported the Second Reading of the Bill, and in Committee Amendments might be made which would meet any reasonable objection. Having regard to the advantages which the Forbes-Mackenzie Act had conferred on Scotland, he hoped the English Bill would be given a Second Reading.

*MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.) said that as a temperance reformer he had no hesitation in supporting the rejection of the Bill. He looked upon prohibition as a dangerous thing which was apt to defeat its own object. Restriction and control were desirable, particularly in regard to the number of houses and the hours during which sale should be permitted, but no Government had the right to attempt to prevent grown-up persons, acting on their consciences, from providing themselves with what they desired. He therefore opposed the Bill without any regard to the arguments that had been used. He, himself, was for many years engaged in administrative work in Ceylon, and he had learned that temperance administration and legislation should be conducted on temperate lines. Compulsion and prohibition would not suffice. Certainly control was desirable, especially as regarded the number of hours of employment, but the attempt to prohibit men from providing themselves with what refreshment they desired should not be encouraged. It was extremely inopportune to propose the Bill at the present time. At a time when locomotion was increased by motor and cycle, refreshment was absolutely necessary for the persons concerned. The working classes had not declared in favour of legislation of this kind, and he believed that no Party in the House would be satisfied with any interference with the freedom of those classes.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) thought the country was rather tired of grandmotherly legislation. If the promoters of the Bill were logical they ought to make the Bill apply to clubs as well as to public-houses; but they did not do that, because they knew perfectly well that no Members of the House would vote for them if they did. He did not believe that hon. Gentlemen opposite were actuated by any burning desire for temperance. He believed they only desired to hamper and impede a trade which was already hampered. Surely, if they were really reformers, they would have done something during the last twenty-five years in the cause of temperance. But they had done nothing except to introduce grocers' licences. He had no axe to grind. He was no brewer. He wished he were. He was a moderate drinker, or what the hon. Member for Camborne called a moderate drunkard. He never would be a party to putting this intolerable nuisance on his constituents. He would never try to make drunk people sober by keeping sober people thirsty.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) said he doubted whether, if a true comparison could be drawn between Scotland under the Forbes Mackenzie Act and England with Sunday opening, the balance of sobriety would be in Scotland's favour. There was a good deal of room for improvement in both countries, but it did not follow that rash remedies should be adopted. Beer was more difficult to keep in good condition for drinking than spirits. He should be sorry if restrictions in the supply of beer led the English people to substitute a taste for ardent spirits for their taste for beer. Tea was doing far more injury to the health of the public than beer could do. Legislation must take into account the habits of the population. The time had not yet arrived for such drastic legislation as the Bill proposed. An Hon. Member informed him that the rector of a certain parish who had a controlling influence favoured a six-day licence. It was adopted, but he was informed by his hon. friend that the rector discovered that a seven-day licence was more beneficial, and he acted accordingly in the interests of temperance and moderation. According to statistics it was difficult to ascertain if the Scottish Act conduced to sobriety. In any event there was a difference between England and Scotland. As regarded tea, the time had arrived when its excessive drinking should be considered. Many medical men were of opinion that excessive tea-drinking was more injurious than the drinking of beer. He considered that instruction in the schools in connection with the poisonous results of excessive tea-drinking should be given. No such drastic proposals as were contained in the Bill should be accepted by the House.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said that those who had advocated, and consistently advocated, temperance for many years past had apparently not thought it worth while to come to the House to support this measure or to place their views upon it before the House.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present, House counted, and forty Members being found present,—

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said he was glad to observe that some of those Members who did take an interest in the question of temperance had at last arrived to take some part in the debate. He admitted that a great deal had been done by intemperate enthusiasts who had all along consistently supported the principle of depriving a man of the opportunity to drink when he was thirsty, and the hon. Baronet the Member for Camborne had done a very great deal for the country in this way. The hon. Baronet opposite had for years past consistently advocated principles with which no one could agree, but what he had done had resulted in good to the people of England, who were not now so intemperate a people as they were. The question now was whether, in view of the improvement which had taken place in the drinking habits of the people, a Bill of this kind was at all necessary. Was it not a slur upon the working classes to say that they, and they alone, should be prevented from enjoying themselves in a moderate way on a Sunday while the wealthier classes could have all they wanted on a Sunday afternoon? He could never be a party to any such proceeding as this. It was quite true that the Bill exempted so-called *bona fide* travellers, but there were a good many travellers who were not *bona fide*. Where they to be exempted too? His own opinion was that education had done more, and was doing more, for the temperance of the country than any Bill of this kind could be expected to do. Such a Bill as the Government recently passed would exercise an enormous influence, for it would teach the people that enjoyment was not to be found in drinking beer and spirits or in doing anything of that sort, and they would find their pleasure in other ways. The hon. Member for Louth, who was as liberal a minded man as himself and others on both sides of the House who could see both sides of the question, was as fond of taking a modicum of refreshment in the House as anybody else, and no doubt would be glad to do so even on a Sunday if it was open, and he was sure that the hon. Member would be the last to deny to the humblest of his constituents the enjoyment which he took in moderation. Habits of temperance were growing in this country. The upper classes, who were the greatest sinners in this way in olden days, had become much more abstemious, and we were now one of the most sober nations in the world. He hoped after what had been said that the hon. Member for Louth would withdraw the Bill.

SIR ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.) said it appeared to him that the discussion was rather of an academic character, since it was obviously impossible for the Bill to make further progress that session. Besides, he did not think it would be generally acceptable to the class which would be chiefly affected. An aspect of the question which always seemed to him very important was that with regard to the enormous number of clubs which were frequented by the working classes, and which were such a growing feature of the social life of our cities. In Bradford, in January this year, something like 150 clubs had been registered, and in that city he believed there were more than 40,000 members of clubs. That represented a very considerable percentage of the working classes in Bradford. This Bill did not deal with clubs, and he supposed it was quite impossible that any Bill of the sort could deal with clubs, because they could not have one kind of legislation dealing with working men and another kind dealing with clubs like the Carlton and the Reform. As far as the prohibition of the opening of clubs on Sunday was concerned, that must be regarded as outside the sphere of practical legislation. The clubs that were associated both with the Unionist and Liberal Parties in his division in Bradford did not open on Sunday, but there were a large number of clubs that did open on Sunday during hours when the public-houses were by law obliged to be closed. He had an experience of that himself in Bradford a winter or two ago. A publican in his constituency spoke to him about the trouble which he was getting into with the licensing authorities because it was alleged that people coming from places of worship on Sunday morning were annoyed by the spectacle of persons the worse for liquor coming out of his premises. The publican asked him to go with him one Sunday morning to see what was taking place. He went, and he saw a large number of men going into workmen's clubs at ten o'clock in the morning. These men remained there, he was told, until half-past twelve or one o'clock. That was a very deplorable evil, which the present Bill did not touch.

The Bill, he thought, inflicted the maximum of inconvenience upon the working people with the minimum of progress towards temperance reform. In the East End of London, too, Sunday clubs played a very remarkable part in social life. In one which he was invited to visit, the card-tables were going all the afternoon, and in the evening smoking concerts or theatrical performances were organised. It seemed to him that this Bill, if carried, would inflict a certain amount of hardship on the working classes, and that, though a curtailment of the hours during which public-houses might be open was desirable, it was rather on Saturday than on Sunday that that curtailment should take place. But this was not a Bill to curtail the hours, but to shut up public-houses altogether. When the Children's Bill was before the House they heard a good deal of the evil effects of children fetching beer from public-houses. He opposed that Bill and he should oppose this, because he thought this sort of sentimental legislation did not have any good effect. This Bill, if passed, would only have the effect, in his opinion, of multiplying the sort of clubs which no one desired to see multiplied, and for that reason he should vote against it when the division took place.

*MR. GROVES (Salford, S.) said that in the past Sunday Closing Bills had been introduced which were admitted to be a compromise, but the present measure was of a different character, and proposed total Sunday closing, and admitted of no compromise whatever. If by any stretch of imagination one could conceive that it was the desire of those who introduced the measure to strike at a social evil in an effective manner, and if they really had the interests of the working classes at heart, he would have expected them to go the "whole hog"—that was to say, to have brought in a Bill to prevent drinking at any time by anybody during the whole of Sunday, commencing with the Members of the House of Commons itself. It had been said that one of the main objects of closing public-houses on Sundays was to secure for the employees at least one day of rest out of the seven. If that were so, why was not the Bill extended to clubs? If they really desired to prevent people from working on Sunday, they must protect those who had the dispensing of liquor in clubs just as much as they did those engaged in public-houses. If they desired also to "protect" the British working man they must follow him into the places where he went when the public-house was closed all day on Sunday—into the club or the shebeen, or to some other place where he might, surreptitiously perhaps, obtain a drink on Sunday. It was clear that to be effective, legislation of this kind must not be partial, as the present measure was. The habits of the population were improving as the result of education and other things, but if they attempted to force through the House drastic legislation of this character the effect would be absolutely the opposite of what they were attempting to bring about. This was not a question to be settled by brewers or publicans. The manufacture of alcoholic liquor was in the hands of the wholesale trade, but Sunday closing affected the social habits of the people, and it was right that the people should have a voice in the settlement of the matter. Had any attempt been made to ascertain the opinion of the working classes? Almost invariably when an attempt was made in large centres of population to get the opinion of the electors on this question the bulk of the people, nine out of ten, entitled to vote did not trouble to express an opinion either one way or the other. Therefore the figures quoted from time to time were absolutely misleading and entirely without value as showing the feeling of the country. Figures of that kind, given from time to time, were incomplete and absolutely unreliable as showing the real feeling of the country on the matter. If one could select a constituency in which the two great political Parties were about evenly divided, he would undertake to say that if he, or anyone opposed to Sunday closing—and he would prefer it should be somebody unconnected with the trade—could take a straight issue from the voters without any extraneous influences being brought to bear, he would secure a majority of at least five to one among the working classes against the principle of total Sunday closing, because it was one of the worst examples of class legislation that could be cited. While the cellar of the rich man was protected, while his club, too, was protected, this was a proposal to interfere with the personal liberty of the subject, and it would, as he could show by statistics if he had time, have very bad consequences indeed.

He thought they had good cause for complaint that the Bill was only placed in the hands of hon. Members that morning.

MR. PERKS: Yesterday morning.

*MR. GROVES accepted the correction and apologised. Still, he thought the promoters ought to have issued it earlier than they had done. There had been some talk of compromise, but the issue before them was a plain one; it was whether public-houses should be closed during the whole of Sunday or not. It was surprising to see what a fatherly interest hon. Members opposite took in the *bona fide* traveller. If ever there was a *bona fide* humbug it was the *bona fide* traveller. Why should he always be taken under the wing of the Temperance party?

MR. PERKS: We will take him out of the Bill if you like.

*MR. GROVES asked who invented the *bona fide* traveller? It was hon. Members opposite, who also invented the bogus club, or rather it was their repressive legislation which did so. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley, who, he believed, was honestly endeavouring to carry out what he considered to be for the amelioration of mankind and to remove what he thought was a social evil from every standpoint, would surely agree with him that bogus clubs were a serious factor which had been absolutely created by repressive legislation, and which would continue to exist so long as they interfered with the reasonable social habits of the working classes. He supposed it would not be denied that the result of the operation of these repressive measures in Wales for many years had been anything but satisfactory, especially in that part of the Principality which adjoined England. The growth of bogus clubs, these subterfuges against the law, had increased enormously. The amount of Sunday drinking, also, had increased in Wales; whereas on the other side of the border, where repressive legislation did not exist, and where reasonable hours for obtaining refreshments were legal on Sundays, they found that the number of arrests and convictions for drunkenness had decreased instead of increased. He gathered from the silence of hon. Members who were promoting the Bill that they admitted this was the result of repressive legislation. He did not propose to trouble the House with a lot of statistics, but he thought it could be clearly demonstrated by figures that in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, where Sunday closing prevailed Sunday drinking was on the increase, while England, where it did not prevail, was yearly becoming more and more a sober nation.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): That is not true as regards Ireland.

*MR. GROVES: Perhaps not the whole of Ireland. Then I withdraw Ireland for the purpose of this argument.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox): Will the hon. Gentleman withdraw Scotland also?

*MR. GROVES: I think I have gone as far as I can honestly go in the matter of withdrawals.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): Will the hon. Gentleman withdraw Wales and every part of England, except Manchester and Salford.

*MR. GROVES replied that Manchester and Salford, according to his information, were parts of England. He had already stated that statistics proved that the drinking habits of the people on Sunday in England, including Manchester and Salford, were improving year by year. But drunkenness was increasing in Wales and in Scotland, because repressive legislation obtained in those countries. Had they forgotten the case of the Clyde steamboats?

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): May I say that there is no liquor whatever sold on the Clyde steamboats on Sunday.

*MR. GROVES said liquor might not be sold on the boats. But still it was consumed there. However, as he appeared to be trenching on personal matters he would, to oblige his hon. and gallant friend, "withdraw the steamboats." But he desired to stand by the main argument with which he started, and he would like to know the views of the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs as to the effect of the repressive legislation in Wales. Could he deny that it had caused an increase of drinking? That was the whole basis of his opposition to the Bill. It was not a question which affected very seriously the publican or the brewer, for, after all, the brewer would still have to brew the beer which was sold in the clubs, hundreds and thousands of which had been established purely to evade the operation of repressive legislation. He hoped they would give him credit for honestly believing that this certainly was not a step in the direction of temperance, but that it would rather lead to an increase in the facilities for evading the law

*MR. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) thought it was characteristic of the debate that every speaker had claimed to be a temperance reformer. The difference between those who supported the measure and those who did not might well be described by saying that the latter took up the attitude: "Not now, and not thus." When legislation was proposed to be applied to the country as a whole, hon. Gentlemen who were opposed to this Bill were very anxious to insist on having local opinion respected; but when the promoters of temperance reform proposed some method of taking local opinion, they at once raised the objection that the minority in any locality ought not to be tyrannised over by the majority, and that, therefore, matters of this kind should not be left to local opinion but should be decided by the House itself, which ought to have the courage of its opinions. It was always "Not thus, and not now." There was great anxiety shown with regard to the *bona fide* traveller and to clubs, but when the Act of 1902 was under consideration in Committee, and a proposal was made to stiffen its requirements with regard to clubs, it was the representatives of the liquor trade who offered the most opposition. If the promoters of this Bill endeavoured to get rid of that *bona fide* humbug the *bona fide* traveller, would the liquor trade support them? One of the hon. Members had spoken about public opinion, and had said he would like to begin with Members of that House, and ask them were they prepared to be abstainers on Sundays? This Bill, however, said nothing about making anybody an abstainer on the Sunday. It did not touch individual habits or practices. It proposed to deal solely with the question of the public sale of drink on Sundays, and that was altogether independent of the private habits of the individual.

What were they to do in the face of what was admittedly a very great evil? They all knew that Saturday was the great drinking day of the nation. One-third of the cases of drunkenness occurred on Saturdays, and the drinking was continued over Sunday into Monday. Well, the promoters of the Bill wanted to do something to make a break. Before Lord Peel's Commission they had some very instructive figures as to the number of convictions for drunkenness in Liverpool. In the ten years ending 1895 there were 17,000 convictions on a Monday, 12,000 on a Tuesday, 10,000 on Wednesday, 9,000 on Thursday, 10,000 on Friday, and on Saturday, the great drinking day of the working classes, there were 35,000, with 6,000 more on the Sunday. These were instructive figures. But why was the total so small on Sundays? Was not the answer clear, viz., that there were less facilities for drinking on that day than on any other. Well, this Bill proposed to altogether abolish the facilities for public sale on Sundays, and they believed that the result would be to largely diminish drinking on Sundays

Precisely the same speeches as they had heard that day were delivered against the Sunday Closing Act for Scotland more than fifty years ago. That Bill had now been in operation for half a century, and in regard to that Bill and the Welsh and Irish Sunday Closing Bills he would like to ask, was there a single Scotch, Irish, or Welsh Member, belonging to any Party in that House, who would get up and move the repeal of the Act for either of those three countries. Although there had been many in that House representing Scotland who were interested up to the hilt in the liquor trade, not one of them dared to take that step, and, what was more, they could not get a single public body in either of the countries to pass a resolution praying for the repeal of these Acts. With such testimony to the success of that legislation he hoped that the hon. Member who was about to speak on behalf of the Government would give them his personal opinion with regard to the Act in Scotland, and he hoped, too, that as a Scotch Member he would not refuse to England the boon which his own country had enjoyed so long.

He would just quote one or two figures to show what had been the effect of the Act in Scotland. Let them take the case of Aberdeen. The average arrests on week days from 1890 to 1896 were 332 a year, but in the whole seven years there were only twelve arrests for drunkenness on Sundays, whereas the total would have been 385 had they been in the same proportion as on week days. Then, again, the consumption of spirits had been enormously reduced. He knew they were sometimes told that the consumption fell immediately after the passing of the Sunday Act in Scotland because the duty on spirits was raised. But, curiously enough, the duty on spirits was raised again in 1862 by 2s. per gallon, yet the consumption did not go down. It went up, in fact, so that when they had an increase in the duty apart from any additional closing, they did not get any reduction of consumption, whereas when they had it jointly with the Sunday Closing Act they did get a reduction. Were they not justified, then, in contending that the diminution of consumption was owing, not to the increase of duty, but rather to Sunday closing? This question of the effect of an increase of duty in reducing the sale of drink was an interesting one. When Budgets were discussed the trade said the taxes on drink were a burden on them. Hon. Members interested in the trade could not have it both ways; they could not claim that the increased duty caused the decreased consumption by raising the price, and at the same time contend that the trade paid the tax. If it did pay it, then the public did not, and the consumption could not be affected by it.

With reference to Ireland, two and a-half years before the Sunday Closing Act was passed the Sunday arrests for drunkenness numbered 11,800; in the two and a-half years after the Act came into operation the total was only 4,200.

Mr. Whittaker.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: And five cities were excluded from the operation of the Act.

*MR. WHITTAKER, continuing, said this was a practical experience which had convinced the people of these countries of the value of such legislation, and which had closed the mouths of those of their representatives who would have liked to move for the repeal of the Acts, but had not dared do so.

Hon. Members who had spoken against the Bill that day had used what he might call the trade "brief." They had told them that under the Acts there had been more drunkenness on Sundays in Wales, in Ireland, and in Scotland than in England. But even if that were true—and he did not admit it for one minute—it was nothing to the point. The real point was that there had been less drunkenness in all these countries since the Sunday Closing Act was passed than there was in those countries before it became law. The habits and conditions of the people varied in different places, but it was undoubted that there was more drunkenness before Sunday closing was enforced than there had been since. Wales and Cardiff had been specially referred to, but had there been a Member for Cardiff who would get up and propose to exempt that town from the operation of the Sunday Closing Act? Would the Cardiff Corporation pass a resolution with a like object? Of course they had trouble over the border, but that was only a reason for extending the Act to England. There always would be a thirsty lot who would go anywhere to get drink, and, instead of going over the border, if this Bill were passed, they would have to go further to the sea-coast, and then there would be no trouble at all. The hon. Member for St. Pancras had suggested that the Bill would lead to an increase of private drinking. That was the old story. He did not think he was doing an injustice to the trade if he ventured to suggest that their opposition to the Bill would not be so strong if they did not think it was going to diminish their trade. If they believed they would sell as much liquor in six days as they now did in seven, he was sure they would support it. But the consumption of liquor had fallen off in the countries where Sunday closing obtained, and what was another good result was that men returned more regularly to their work on Monday morning and there were fewer arrests for drunkenness. Where, then, was the evidence of more drinking in private?

Let them consider, too, the condition of the people engaged in the trade. It was the deadliest trade a man could engage in. Every ten years the Registrar-General published a Report showing the rates of mortality in the principal trades of the country, and these Reports proved that the death rate among those engaged in public-houses was higher than in any other occupation. There were deadly trades in which people engaged—in the Potteries, where deadly chemicals were issued; in Sheffield, where the saw-grinder breathed steel and stone dust—but no occupation was so deadly as that of the liquor retailer, and on that ground alone they might do something at any rate to brighten their lot, to give them one day's rest in seven, to give them a chance of breathing fresh air one day in the week. Not only were they tempted by their very calling to take too much alcohol, but the liquor shops themselves were most unhealthy places, badly ventilated and frequently crowded by the least satisfactory specimens of humanity, who scattered the germs of disease all about the place.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester had told them that drinking tea was worse than drinking beer. But did he think that teetotallers specially drank tea? He did not think they did, but one thing he did know, and that was that tea-drinking never caused a man to kick his wife, or assault the police, or neglect his children, or stay away from his work and become a charge on the community either as a criminal or as a pauper. If a working man wanted his beer on a Sunday he could answer for it that the business capacity and ingenuity of the liquor trade would ensure the adoption of means which would enable his requirements to be supplied. He would be able to have it as fresh for his dinner on Sunday as on any other day. They were always told that working men were opposed to the Bill, but the working men representatives in that House were all in favour of Sunday closing. No, the opposition to the Bill came from a very different class, and it was noteworthy that every one of the names on the whip sent out against the measure was that of a Member financially interested in the liquor trade right up to the hilt. At the very beginning of that debate a count was moved by the representative of one of the biggest brewing firms in the country, and later on another count was moved by one of the largest Irish whiskey blenders; and who had been prolonging the debate lest a division should be taken? Not the working men, but men interested in the liquor trade.

There had been some talk by those opposed to the Bill about Amendments. The mover and seconder of the Amendment had intimated their willingness to accept amendments of the law. And it was urged that they should have been in the Bill. But what Amendments?

MR. MOON: I said on the line of curtailment.

MR. WHITTAKER: What curtailment? Was it to be a curtailment of hours or was it to be left to the discretion of the justices? Were the houses to be open only for "off" sale, to sell only dinner beer, or were they to be open to sell to those who entered the public-house simply to booze? It was not the *bona fide* traveller who need be considered: he would be able to get his alcohol, at all events. What were the Amendments they required?

MR. MOON: I read the words from the Report of the majority of the Commissioners. That should be sufficient.

*MR. WHITTAKER said the hon. Member was only one of the opponents of the Bill. Was his view accepted by all his friends? This was essentially a matter for discussion in Committee. Let the Bill go to a Committee and let them see what the House wanted. The promoters were willing to accept such reasonable Amendments as the House wished. The proper plan was to send the Bill to a Committee and let Members put down their own Amendments and have them considered, discussed and decided upon. To vote against the Second Reading would be to throw the question out entirely and render Amendments impossible. If a Sunday Closing Bill were passed for England there might be disturbances for a week or two. The liquor trade would see to that. They were at the bottom of the business at Cardiff, in order, if possible, to discredit the Act; but the police put the disturbance down and there was an end of it. The attempt would be made here and it would fail. The debate had not proceeded on the highest lines. They were face to face with a great evil, and they had had little petty matters of personal inconvenience put forward—and that from the Party that talked of patriotism and Empire, and the making of sacrifice to maintain it. Surely, if there were some little personal inconvenience, in the face of a gigantic evil and a national degradation like this it would be worth while to risk it in order to secure a more sober nation.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.) said he had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley with very great interest, because no doubt the hon. Member and his friends hoped and trusted that by legislation of this nature they would be able to do some good to their fellow-men. He had suggested that if the Second Reading were agreed to, the Bill could be amended in Committee in the way some hon. Members desired. But was it open to a Committee so to amend the Bill? What was the title and scope of the Bill? It was a Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday. Could it be amended so as merely to limit the number of hours of sale?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Irish Sunday Closing Bill bore the same title, but an Amendment excepting from its operation five cities was carried in Committee.

Mr. Whittaker.

*MR. COCHRANE said that was a perfectly different thing.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Not at all.

*MR. COCHRANE repeated that it was. They might except certain districts, but obviously an Amendment altering the Bill into one to limit the hours of sale might be ruled out of order by the Chairman of the Committee.

MR. PERKS said the preamble provided for any number of limitations

*MR. COCHRANE still maintained that he was perfectly right, especially as the proposer had refrained from giving any undertaking. It was extremely inconvenient that the Bill was not in the hands of Members yesterday. Surely a criminal had a right to know by what rope he was to be hanged. The hon. Member for Salford had found the difficulty arising from that. He had been obliged to withdraw his statement about the Clyde steamboats.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: And also about Ireland.

*MR. GROVES: I simply withdrew the statement that liquor was sold on the steamboats. It is consumed on them in enormous quantities.

*MR. COCHRANE said that everybody who had been on a Clyde steamboat was aware of the mysterious bottles produced by passengers. The limited number of Members who had spoken in favour of the Bill was some measure of the little zeal felt for it. He did not think they believed in their hearts that a measure such as this was ever likely to be passed into law. It was a very familiar Bill. They had had it before them for thirty or forty years and it had never made any real progress, and so long as it embodied such extreme provisions it was not likely to. Its object was to entirely prohibit the Sunday sale of intoxicating liquors; and to except whom? the privileged classes of lodgers in hotels, and *bonâ fide* travellers. Why should a lodger in an hotel be more entitled to get a glass of beer on Sunday than a lodger in some other house? Or a man might lodge in a temperance hotel, but would he be less thirsty than if he lodged in another hotel? Why should a man living at home with his wife and family be debarred from getting his glass of beer when a man living at a hotel was allowed to do so? A working man had told him that morning that he was very fond on Sunday afternoon of taking a walk in the parks and listening to the lectures there—some of them temperance lectures—and, after that, he said he would be very glad indeed to get a glass of beer. No doubt the intentions of the promoters of the Bill were excellent. They desired to promote temperance and the observance of the Sabbath. But good intentions were not sufficient. They all knew the place which was said to be paved with good intentions. When a Bill restrictive of public liberty was brought forward it must be shown that there was a reasonable prospect of its being a success and that it would do some good. This the proposer of the Bill had failed to do. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley no doubt set an admirable example which, if followed more generally, would render such Bills as this unnecessary.

*AN HON. MEMBER: Why is it a splendid example?

MR. COCHRANE said the hon. Member had the courage of his convictions, and instead of going to his brother in the street and telling him he was a poor working man, unfit to govern himself, and that therefore he should not be allowed to get a glass of beer if he wanted it, he expressed his disapproval of liquor itself and denied himself the pleasure of taking it. Other hon. Members did not go that length. They were prepared to place obstacles in the way of the man who had been toiling all the week, knowing that they themselves had their own cellars or their clubs, and could get their liquor on Sunday if they wished it. Nobody denied that acts of violence, crime, and insanity were caused by excessive drinking. But insanity was not always caused by beer-drinking.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): 25 per cent. of it is.

*MR. COCHRANE stated that quite recently one of the greatest experts on insanity had said to him, "I am coming to the conclusion that drinking is not so much the cause of insanity as that insanity is the cause of drinking." [AN HON. MEMBER—Excessive drinking!] Were teetotallers never insane? Some of them thought a proposition that they were never insane could not be sustained. He hoped excessive drinkers were in a great minority, and that they were a diminishing number.

*MR. HUNTER CRAIG (Lanarkshire, Govan): There are 800,000 drunkards in the United Kingdom.

*MR. COCHRANE: That was too many, and he would take every reasonable step he could to reduce the number. The Government had, in fact, done so. The measure passed last session would, he hoped, go far in that direction. It had been recognised by the Royal Commissioners that most people in this country still regarded a certain amount of alcohol as an ordinary article of diet, yet this Bill would prevent any alcohol at all, whether taken in moderation or excess, being sold on Sunday. He could not see on what ground. It was not a wrong thing to drink a glass of beer any more than it was to drink a bottle of ginger-beer; and if it was a wrong thing to drink a glass of beer on Sunday, it was wrong to drink it at all.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): What is the difference between Scotland and England?

*MR. GROVES: One consumes whisky and the other beer.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Will you repeal the Scotch Act?

*MR. COCHRANE said he would deal with Scotland later. The logical conclusion of the hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill was total prohibition, but he did not come to that conclusion in his Bill, because he knew the country would not stand it for one moment. With regard to Scotland, Sunday closing had there been in force for fifty years, and personally he preferred the evils they had to flying to those he knew not of. He knew the state of Scotland.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is that why you do not dissolve?

***Mr. COCHRANE** replied that there was a time for all things. The difference between England and Scotland was a difference of national character. In Scotland they preferred their alcohol in whisky, which he himself thought more wholesome than beer. Whisky could be kept from Saturday till Monday, but stale beer, he was informed, was an abomination. There was too much drunkenness in Scotland, and he feared that by Sunday closing they had to a certain extent done in Scotland what they might do here—driven out legitimate drinking in the public-house and encouraged illegitimate drinking in the shebeen, and to the creation of fictitious *bona fide* travellers. That it was no idle fear had been substantiated by the result of the Welsh Sunday closing, which had been but a modified success. The Chief Constable of Monmouthshire had stated that there was a great deal of drunkenness on the border, and that if Sunday closing was extended to that county drunkenness would increase and the whole county become as objectionable as the Welsh border was.

Sir ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorganshire, E.) said that was not the opinion of the County Council of Monmouthshire, because they had passed a vote in favour of the inclusion of Monmouthshire.

***Mr. COCHRANE** said the evidence to which he had referred was perhaps somewhat out of date, but he had mentioned it as an instance in support of the point he was making—namely, that by prohibiting legitimate means of refreshment they often drove people to avail themselves of illegitimate means. He then quoted evidence of a number of witnesses to the effect that at Cardiff there had been an improvement in the main streets since the Act had come into force, but a contrary tendency in the back streets, and an increase of drunkenness in private houses.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: What is the finding of the Commission?

***Mr. COCHRANE** said he had not had time to refresh his memory with their recommendations. His point was that, at any rate in the early part of the period which followed the passage of the Act, a danger was shown of driving drinking into the back streets and private houses. If hon. Members who were making efforts to secure greater temperance had their way they would run the risk of creating greater evils. The Royal Commission on Licensing did not recommend entire closing. The majority thought that would be a step too far in advance of the public opinion of the day. He thought the Commission had reported too recently for a great change of opinion to have since taken place. If the House were to go the length of preventing any man getting a glass of beer on Sunday, they would open the way to the possibility of a great reaction which would probably throw back the cause of temperance. The view of the Government was that hon. Members should vote on this Bill exactly as their opinions might guide them. Personally he regarded the danger of reaction as very real. The Bill could not be modified in the direction which the proposer had suggested, because it seemed to him that would be out of order. ["No, no!"] If hon. Members voted for the Bill they would be voting for a Bill which would deprive the citizens of this country of a very large measure of their liberty and freedom. He would have no hesitation in voting against the Second Reading.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 108; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 182.)

AYES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas

Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gilhooly, James
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hain, Edward
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Higham, John Sharp
Horniman, Frederick John
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Kenna, Reginald
Morpeth, Viscount
Moss, Samuel
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Rea, Russell
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Russell, T. W.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Perks and Mr. Cameron Corbett.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Austin, Sir John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Crean, Eugene
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Gunter, Sir Robert
Harrington, Timothy
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J F (Sheffield, Brightside
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks N.R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. W.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Sir Harry S (Limehouse
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.

Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield
Walker, Col. William Hall
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir James Fergusson and Mr. Moon.

Words added. Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

[SECOND READING].

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) said that this Bill was passed in 1895, and again in 1901, when it was referred to a Select Committee. As that Committee did not feel that a necessity existed for it the promoters of the Bill were prepared to limit the scope of the measure practically to mines. This was not a small matter, because there were employed in coal mines alone no fewer than 842,000 men and boys. Hon. Members would, therefore, realise that this fact alone, in a question of safeguarding and providing for the safety of life and limb, was well deserving of the consideration and attention of the House. The Under-Secretary for the Home Department, speaking in 1901, said that if the Bill had been confined to winding engines it would have been a different matter. Now the promoters of this Bill were prepared in Committee to have it amended so as to apply to mines only. It was stated in the Report of the Committee that the passing of this measure would remove the responsibility for the employment of competent persons in charge of engines and boilers from the owners and users of steam. He was quite aware that under the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887 there were most admirable provisions imposing upon the owner the necessity of employing certificated managers, and regulations for the guidance of those in charge of boilers and engines, but that added an additional safeguard to that the Bill provided, because it did not require the mine-owner to make very revolutionary changes in order to carry into operation the provisions of this Bill. The fact was that, so far as he understood the matter, there would be created under this Bill a large body of certificated engineers competent to take charge of engines and boilers connected with mines, and it would be an obvious advantage to colliery owners when they were about to select men to take charge of engines and boilers that they should have this large body of competent persons who had obtained certificates from which to make their selection. He thought that would be a great advantage.

By previous legislation this House had shown that it regarded it as of the greatest importance that certificated men should be employed in charge of engines and boilers where there was great risk to life in case of disaster through ignorance or neglect. Under the Merchant Shipping Acts it was made obligatory that only certificated men should be in charge of engines and boilers on vessels doing a foreign trade. If for the safety of passengers and those employed in the mercantile marine it was necessary to compel the owners of ships to employ only certificated engineers to be placed in charge of engines and boilers, was it not equally necessary that only certificated men should be employed in mines in the same capacity? In the Report of the Select Committee there appeared a calculation that in fifty weeks during which the men employed in collieries worked five days per week no less than 156,000,000 persons would be raised and lowered by enginemen employed in mines. He thought it was a reasonable request that similar protection to that which was given to the travelling public in the case of steamships employed in a foreign trade should be extended to coal mines. He trusted that a Second Reading would again be given to this Bill, and although the measure as it stood applied to other trades, hon. Members might rest assured that the promoters would be prepared in Committee to apply the Bill to mines and to mines only.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) thought the House had some right to complain of the way this Bill had been introduced. Three or four years ago this measure was read a second time, on the understanding that it was to go to a Select Committee. It was sent to a Select Committee and they reported strongly against it as it stood at the present moment. Having the decision of that Committee before them, he should have thought that the promoters of this Bill would have put it in such a form as had now been suggested and apply it to mines only, but nothing of the kind had been done.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON said he had already informed the House that the promoters of the Bill were willing in Committee to strike out all parts which did not apply to mines.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON said the Bill ought not to be presented to the House in this way. What sort of a Bill was it going to be when it was cut down in this fashion and applied to mines only. Would it apply to persons in charge of boilers as well as steam engines?

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Certainly.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON said boilers were no more dangerous in mines than in other places, and as a matter of fact there were fewer accidents in mines from this cause. Under the Coal Mines Regulation Act the owner or the agent of a coal mine was personally liable in regard to negligence in this matter, and if incompetent persons were employed to manage boilers or engines they could be fined or sent to prison.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted and forty Members being found present,

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON resumed his speech. He wished that the hon. Member who had moved the Second Reading of the Bill had gone a little more into detail as to what the Report of the Committee contained. When he went to the library to try to secure a copy of the Report he found that the hon. Member had already taken it into the House. He was quite certain that the Committee did not recommend that the Bill should apply to mines only.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: But the Secretary for the Home Department suggested that if it applied to mines only that would be quite a different matter.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON said the hon. Member had introduced a Bill on which a Select Committee had reported adversely, and then he came and told the House that the promoters were willing to make it applicable only to certain classes of engines and boilers. The Report of the Committee was not that the Bill should be cut down to one applicable to mines only, where, indeed, the regulations should be of greater severity than in other cases. Some attention should have been given to those paragraphs in the Report which showed how completely illusory the Bill was. What was now proposed was to cut out certain absurd parts of the Bill, to leave all the other absurdities as they stood, and then to say that they would only apply to mines. Any more absurd proposal he had never seen in his experience of that House. The Bill was intended to apply to persons in charge of engines and boilers. Clause 3 provided—

> "The term 'boiler' shall mean and include only a closed vessel having a steam pressure of ten pounds to the square inch and upwards, as may be used for generating steam, or for heating water, or for heating other liquids, or into which steam is admitted for heating, steaming, boiling, or other similar purposes; the term 'engine' means any engine used in the production of motive power, and worked by steam from a boiler; the term 'horse-power' means nominal horse-power."

Clause 4 exempted from the application of the Bill—

> "Any boiler or engine used exclusively for domestic, agricultural, or farming purposes, or any boiler or engine used in the service of His Majesty, or any boiler or engine used by a railway company, or any boiler or engine used on board a steamship having a certificate

from the Board of Trade, or any road traction-engine or steam-roller."

The Report of the Committee showed how absurd that proposal was. The scheme of the Bill was to provide two classes of certificates, the qualifications required being described in Clause 6 as follows—

> "(i.) A person taking charge or control of any boiler or engine to which this Act applies, of five horse-power or upwards, or of any engine to which this Act applies, used for winding workmen or minerals up or down the shaft of a mine, must hold a first-class certificate or a special certificate of service under this Act; (ii.) A person taking charge or control of any other boiler or engine to which this Act applies must be the holder either of such a certificate as aforesaid or of a second-class certificate under this Act."

The Report of the Committee condemned the proposal in regard to the second-class certificates as perfectly illusory. If such certificates were granted they would only result in increasing the danger by creating a false sense of security, because they would afford no guarantee whatever of the qualifications of a person who had the management of a boiler or engine. Clause 7 provided that the penalty for taking, or employing to take, charge or control of a boiler or engine without the qualification required by the Act was to be a penalty of forty shillings for the first offence, and ten pounds for the second offence. Far heavier penalties were imposed under the present law in connection with the working of machinery at mines. He would remind the House that the Workmen's Compensation Act contained provisions which operated very usefully in the direction of securing safety. [An HON. MEMBER: Does that prevent accidents?] It did not prevent accidents, nor would this Bill. He took no exception to the severity of the regulations under which the owners and managers of mines were obliged to work. The workmen ought to be protected by the strictest provisions in the carrying on of their dangerous occupation, but he maintained that the conditions which secured safety in the carrying on of industries were not strengthened by the illusory protection proposed to be given by this Bill.

Another objection to the Bill was that the responsibility was diffused over two Government Departments. The latter part of Clause 6 provided that the Board of Trade was to have power to make certain regulations in regard to the certificates, while Clause 10 provided that all certificates should be made in duplicate, one part to be delivered to the person entitled to the certificate, and the other to be "kept in such manner as a Secretary of State directs." His fundamental objection to the whole scheme of the Bill was that such certificates as were proposed to be granted would not form a proper test of the fitness of a man to manage an engine or boiler. By far the most important qualifications required were those moral qualities which could not be tested by examinations. A man might be able to pass an examination, and yet not have the nerve or force of character necessary in one who had the control of engines and boilers, and this was especially true in the case of mines. Accidents from over-winding were now very few. This was partly because of the precautions which the discoveries of science had enabled mineowners to adopt, and partly owing to the fact that great care was always taken to see that those in charge of mining operations were fully qualified. [An HON. MEMBER: A good argument for the Bill.] He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) seconded the Amendment. He was a member of the Select Committee which considered the Bill brought forward in a former year, and he thought those who investigated the provisions of the measure at that time had some reason to complain that exactly the same Bill had been reintroduced now. Not the slightest respect had been paid by the promoters of this Bill to the evidence of the witnesses, or to the Report of the Select Committee. He confessed that the part of the case which then impressed him most was the absolute, paramount, and governing importance of moral qualities on the part of those who had charge of boilers—not merely moral qualities in the sense of steadiness and sobriety, but those qualities of a purely intellectual character which enabled a person in charge of a boiler to act with decision at a critical moment.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: Do moral qualities include a knowledge of machinery?

***Sir FRANCIS POWELL** hoped the hon. Member would allow him to proceed. He knew as much about the subject as the hon. Member. A comparison had been drawn between men to whom this Bill would apply, and men in charge of marine boilers. It seemed to him that there was no analogy whatever. To have charge of engines and boilers on a ship in mid-Atlantic was quite a different thing from having charge of engines and boilers on land, where public opinion could be brought to bear on the selection of the individual and where his conduct could be kept under daily review. Speaking as a layman in these matters he thought the promoters of the Bill held somewhat exaggerated views as to the length of time required in order to obtain the necessary knowledge and experience. Another thing which had struck him was that a man might be very fit in one year to hold a certificate of the nature proposed, while at the end of a certain number of years he might have lost his skill and be no longer the man he formerly was. He and some of the other members of the Committee thought that a certificate under such circumstances, so far from being a protection, might be a snare and a trap. It should be remembered that employers had not only a strong interest in taking precautions for protecting the life and limb of their workmen, but also in providing for the proper management of their machinery. They did not wish to risk precious machinery to incompetent persons. The safety of property was a consideration inferior to the protection of life; nevertheless, if industry was to go on, property must be secured.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Order for consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee), read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 176.]

Whereupon Mr. Deputy-Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXLVI.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Advertisement Regulations [H.L.]	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Committee 15th May (239)
Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland)	*Lord Avebury*	2nd Reading 11th May (8) 2nd Reading 23rd May (1105)
Ecclesiastical Commissioners (No. 2) [H.L.]	*Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*	Read 1ª 12th May (166)
*Extradition [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1ª 22nd May (920) Read 2ª 25th May (1352)
*Naval and Military Medals [H.L.]	*Earl of Donoughmore*	Read 2ª 15th May (245) Committee 25th May (1352)
Public Health Acts Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Hylton*	Read 2ª 11th May (10)
Public Meetings Facilities	*Lord Burghclere*	Read 2ª 23rd May (1087)
Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 2ª 11th May (7) Committee / Report } 16th May (405) Read 3ª and passed 19th May (856)
Polling Arrangements (County Councils) [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 2ª 11th May (6) Committee / Report } 16th May (405) Read 3ª and passed 19th May (856)
*Supreme Court of Judicature Ireland (No. 1) [H.L.]	*Lord Ashbourne*	Read 1ª 18th May (728) Read 2ª 22nd May (936) Committee / Report } 25th May (1352)
*Supreme Court of Judicature Ireland (No. 2) [H.L.]	*Lord Ashbourne*	Read 1ª 18th May (728) Read 2ª 25th May (1353)
*Workmen's Compensation [H.L.]	*Lord Belper.*	Report 22nd May (920)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, &c., Continuance	*Mr. Long*	Committee 17th May (631)
*Alkali, etc., works	*Mr. Gerald Balfour*	Read 1° 22nd May (990)
Architects' Registration	*Mr. Atherley Jones*	Read 1° 15th May (307)
Canals	*Mr. Barran*	Bill withdrawn 26th May (1536)
Closing of Licensed Premises (St. Patrick's Day) (Ireland)	*Mr. O'Mara*	Bill withdrawn 25th May (1511)
Elementary Education (School Attendance) [219	*Mr. Yoxall*	Read 1° 15th May (306)
*Finance	*Mr. Austen Chamberlain*	2nd Reading 15th May (307) " " 16th May (501) 582 Committee 22nd May (1028) " 23rd May (1140) (1192) " 24th May (1250)
*Government Ships	*Mr. Pretyman*	2nd Reading 17th May (685)
Land Values Taxation (Scotland)	*Mr. Ainsworth*	Read 2° 19th May (866)
Merchant Shipping (Pilotage)	*Sir H. S. King*	Read 1° 11th May (164)
Sale of Intoxicants to Children [H.L.]	*Sir John Dorington*	Bill withdrawn 25th May (1420)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Sunday)	*Mr. Perks*	2nd Reading (adjourned) 26th May (1537)
Salmon Fishery Law Amendment	*Mr. Grenfell*	Read 1° 15th May (307)
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge)	*Mr. Joseph Walton*	2nd Reading (adjourned) 26th May (1579)
Sunday Trading (Scotland)	*Mr. C. Corbett*	Read 1° 15th May (306)
Trades Unions and Trade Disputes	*Mr. Whittaker*	Bill withdrawn 26th May (1586)
*Valuation (Ireland)	*Mr. Atkinson*	Read 1° 15th May (306)
Vehicles Lights	*Mr. Bigwood*	2nd Reading defeated 12th May (181)
Women's Enfranchisement	*Mr. Slack*	2nd Reading adjourned 12th May (217)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1905.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in preceding Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Education (Scotland) (Continuation Classes),—Copy of Code of Regulations for Continuation Classes providing further Instruction for those who have left school, 1905 [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	15 May	One month
Public Records (Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments),—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents in the Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	16 May	4 weeks
Inebriate Reformatories (Scotland) (Regulations),—Copy of General Regulations for the management and discipline of certified Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland [61 and 62 Vic., c. 60, s. 21]	25 May	4 weeks
Railways (Certificates) (Ewell and Long Grove Railway),—Copy of Draft Certificate of the Board of trade authorising the construction of a Railway from Ewell to Long Grove [27 and 28 Vic., c. 120, s. 14]	29 May	6 weeks

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

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Lord Chancellor
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Lord Chancellor of Ireland
Lord Ashbourne.

Lord Chief Justice
Lord Alverstone.

Lord Great Chamberlain
Marquess of Cholmondeley.

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland
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    - *Os.* Mr. J. Howard, *May 18*, 807.
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  - *Os.* Mr. S. MacNeill, *May 18*, 848, 849; Mr. Pretyman, 850.
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Rt. Hon. A. Lyttelton.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Marquess of Lansdowne.

Secretary of State for the Home Department

Rt. Hon. A. Akers-Douglas.

Secretary of State for India

Rt. Hon. W. St. John Brodrick

Secretary (Chief) for Ireland

Rt. Hon. W. H. Long.

Secretary for Scotland

Marquess of Linlithgow.

Secretary of State for War

Rt. Hon. H. O. Arnold-Forster.

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Solicitor-General for Ireland
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Solicitor-General for Scotland
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